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- LOST IN BLUE 2
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84 Room Service
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30
Well slap me silly.

I don't think this guy is even reading the table of contents, Chris.

He sure isn't, Drew. He'll be lucky to even find the Wii Sports article.

84
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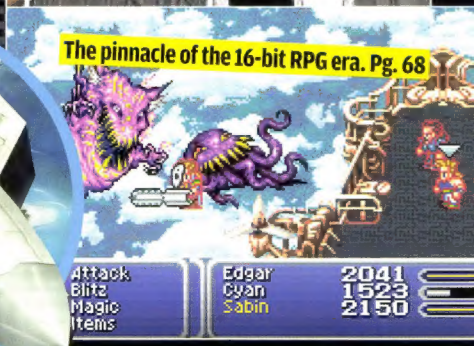

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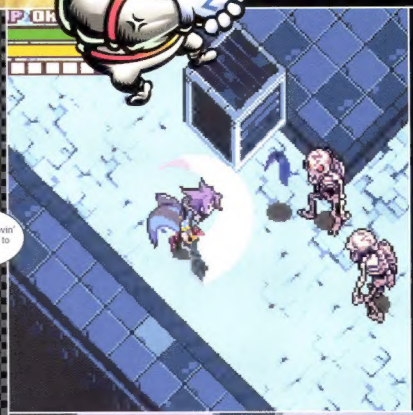

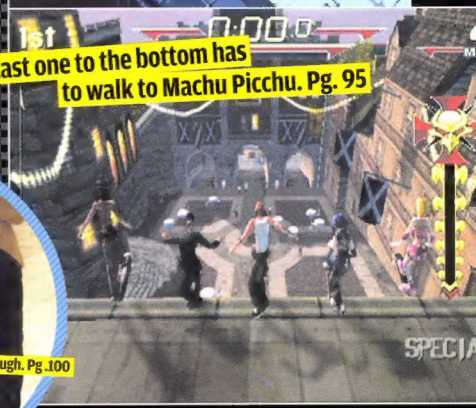

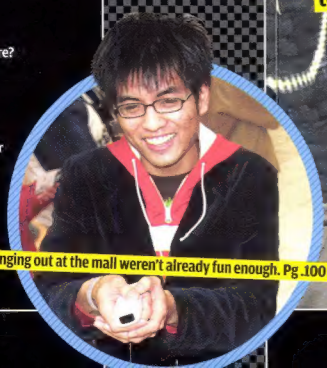

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DS = Nintendo DS
GBA = Game Boy Advance
GCN = Nintendo GameCube
GEN = Sega Genesis
NES = Nintendo Entertainmet System
N64 = Nintendo 64
SNES = Super Nintendo
VC = Wii Virtual Console
Wii = Wii

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Pulse

DON'T HOG THE Wii

If you have a Wii, you've probably learned that it's nearly impossible to keep it to yourself. It turns out that Wii is a people magnet. Gone are the days when you could hole up in a dark corner with a favorite game for hours or days on end. What you'll find instead is that friends, family members, and pretty much anyone who learns that you've got a Wii will beg to come to your house to play. It's tough being at the center of attention, and it'll be harder still to give up precious time that could be spent playing Twilight Princess. But if you find yourself in this position, just play along. After a few Wii sessions, your friends will likely get their own Wiis and want to hold their own Wii parties. That translates into free chow, more players packing their own Wii controllers, and the chance to add lots of people to your friend list. It's a new world for the Nintendo faithful, and NP is here to help. This month we share tips for holding a successful Wii Sports tournament and we introduce WarioWare: Smooth Moves, Wii Play, and Mario Party 8—a trio of awesome Wii party games.

Two upcoming titles will require serious alone-time with your Wii. Heatseeker puts you in control of a fleet of fighter jets and Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones re-creates Ubisoft's awesome GCN adventure with Wii controls. We're also featuring previews of Diddy Kong Racing, Hotel Dusk: Room 215, and Lost in Blue 2 for DS. And we've laid out strategies for surviving the Cave of Ordeals in Twilight Princess and completing FINAL FANTASY III. That should keep even the busiest gamer happy.

Scott Pelland
Managing Editor

LETTERS

WE'RE WAY AHEAD OF YOU

Starting after the Wii is out, NP should include a section about your recommendations for available Virtual Console games. It'd only have to take up a few pages.

Sonic Sam
via the Internet

Funny you should mention that, Sam. This month we're debuting a new Wii Channels column featuring overviews of upcoming Virtual Console games. Check out page 46 for our complete round-up.

WE PITY THE FOOL

I sat in freezing-cold weather for six-and-a-half hours the night before the Wii launched. After I got one, I went home and set it up in my room, and it's sah-weet! The only problem I can see so far, however, is when I tried to create a Mr. T Mii in the Mii Channel, there was no mohawk in the hairstyles section! What's up with that?!?

Jeremy J.
via the Internet

We tried to make a Mr. T Mii, as well (shocker), and ran into the same issue. Rumor has it that the Mii Channel is capable of expansion, including the addition of new hairstyles. Stay up-to-date regarding changes to the channels in our new Wii Channels column.

GET YOURSELF CONNECTED

I'm extremely thrilled about the Wii; all of the new hardware, capabilities, and everything else are so incredibly cool. But I have one major question about the online functionality: Is it possible to connect your Wii to your Nintendo Wi-Fi USB connector to play online, or do I have to buy a new router that is compatible with it? My friend says this is possible, but I have not heard mention of this information anywhere.

Ctrl_Alt_Destroy
via the Internet

You've got a smart friend, C_A_D; you can indeed use the same Nintendo Wi-Fi USB connector that you've been using with your DS to take your Wii online.

MAKING THE GRADE

Nintendo Power, I've got a question. Around early November I handed my report card to my parents and they said they'd take away my television, my video games, and the chance to go get a Wii on launch day. My report card had an A+, an A, and two B+'s. They said that they won't accept any B's even though I got two A's! Do you agree that taking away these things is a little bit off the edge?

David K.
via the Internet

That's pretty brutal, but rules are rules, and we're not ones to talk back to our mothers. However, we're not the types to get A's on our report cards, either, so we can hardly relate to your predicament.

FEEL THE TINGLE

I just heard that there will be no Tingle in Twilight Princess! I can understand that it is the "Twilight" princess and the makers want it to be less goofy, but this is terrible! I thought he was the only guy that would bring the funny, awesomely fun side quests to the game. But now, I'm not sure we'll ever see those things.

Greg L.
via the Internet

Tingle is taking a little vacation from the Zelda series. Don't worry; there are plenty of other benignly creepy characters roaming the lands of Twilight Princess. Falbi and Fyer, anyone?

YOU GET USED TO THE SMELL

I want to work for Nintendo Power in a few years, but that means I'll have to be in the same building as Andy . . . is it really worth it?

Ian H.
via the Internet

It's like working at the zoo—as long as you have all your inoculations and know how to keep your distance when he gets riled, working with Andy can actually be kinda fun. Kinda.

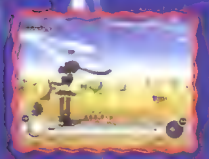
HOW ILLUMINATING

Every August my family and my friend's family go to a vacation home. This year while my friend, his sister, and I were playing DS we had a blackout. So we used the light from our DSs to find our parents and some candles. Our DSs saved the day! Thanks, Nintendo!

Kyle B.
via the Internet

Wii

Yell out "fore!" with friends and family in your living room while taking actual swings with the Wii Remote™!



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Pulse

I have been waiting for the lanch of Wii for a very long time. I have a problem, though. Some people in my class think that Wii sucks and Twilight Princess is stupid. I, on the other hand, think that Nintendo rocks, Wii is awesome, and Twilight Princess is one of the greatest things that has ever happened to video games. I know that they will never agree with me, but I want them to stop insulting Wii. What should I do?

Alan R.
via the Internet

We couldn't agree with you more about Wii and Twilight Princess, but quit being such a wuss! You really shouldn't let it get under your skin– there will always be people who disagree with you, no matter the topic. Just roll with the punches—just know you're right and let 'em say what they want. What they say won't affect your enjoyment in the slightest.

POKéBLING

I've been looking on the web for stuff about Pokemon Diamond and Pearl, and everywhere I've looked says it came out on September 28 in Japan. Please tell me the Big N's gonna release it over here as well, because if it ends up being released only in Japan, I might have to teach myself Japanese.

Josh G
via the Internet

Thanks to the DS's popularity and a cool presell giveaway, the Japanese launch of Pokémon Diamond and Pearl on September 28 was a raging success. Fortunately it won't be necessary to learn Japanese right away—check out our news story on page 19 for the first North American launch information.

GET SERIOUS

I was reading Volume 210 and read K.'s letter about you guys being more serious in Pulse. WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?!? That is the best part about the magazine. You don't send a letter or e-mail to Nintendo Power if you are looking for a serious answer. Use some other magazine or website. Everyone knows that.

Josh M.
via the Internet

Um, thanks for the compliment, we think. While we do try to be funny in Pulse, we're more than willing to answer good questions and take critical feedback about the magazine, too. And exalt Chuck Norris.

QUIT STARING AT ME

I was wondering if you could make a Super Smash Bears game featuring Care Bears. Their little tummy thingies could be like guns or chainsaws or whatever, and there could be one really cool character like Solid Snake. Then you could kick furry butt; and for me that would be really fun.

The Duke of Smashing
via the Internet

We've gotten a lot of Brawl character ideas (boy, have we), but this might be the first brand-new Smash-game pitch we've received. Call us crazy, but we're having trouble envisioning Love-a-lot Bear hacking Tenderheart Bear to fluffy bits with a chainsaw. But we're up for anything.

SUPER MARIO SPACKLE

If Mario is a plumber then why doesn't his butt crack show in any of his games?

DarthMullet
via the Internet

Good question. We did a little research, and there are actually three reasons. One, he always wears stylish suspenders; two, he never actually does any plumbing; and three, Nintendo doesn't wanna get Mario in trouble with the ESRB.

SURE, YOU CAN TRUST US

I think you guys have the best game magazine in the world and I'm not accusing you of anything, but could you show us subscribers some proof that the contests in every issue aren't rigged? I mean, is it just a ploy to get people to send in their e-mail and house addresses so they can send advertisements in return? I'm not sure how you would prove that it's not rigged, but I would really like to know one way or the other. Thanks a lot.

Subzero925
via the Internet

We promise that the sweepstakes are definitely not rigged; on the contrary, we use the response cards in Player's Poll for feedback from our readers. Also, we've run several articles about some of our contest winners. Back in Volume 206, we reported on Paul's trip to E3; then in Volume 211 we detailed lucky grandma Charleen's trip to New York.

TREAT OR TRICK

I needed to fill up a day waiting for the Wii, so I figured I'd make a Wii-shaped cake to send to Nintendo Power. So, here it is.

Lucas A.
via the Internet

Gee thanks, Lucas, but we thought we'd be getting a real cake, not just a picture of a cake! We're starving here!

UHH, BUY THE MAGAZINE?

How long on average does a letter to you guys take to get back to us? And how do we know if our letter will be put in Pulse?

Cole C.
via the Internet

You can be assured that we read every letter that comes in, no matter how painfully ludicrous the subject. But since we get about 2,500 letters a month, there's no way we'd be able to respond to them all. And if you wanna know whether your letter will make it into Pulse, you'll just have to keep reading every month. Or you could try a psychic hotline—they're pretty reliable.

GET TO WORK!

I think I saw Steve Thomason when I picked up my Wii at Super Wal-Mart! But what's he doing in Wyoming? You have some explaining to do.

Youdonthavetoknowmyname
via the Internet

We're pretty sure that wasn't Steve—he's been working like a dog around here. Maybe you saw his twin brother, Xamot?

PLEASE WRITE US:

pulse@nintendopower.com
Or via Pelipper at:

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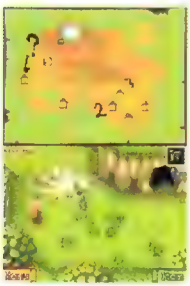
MOST WANTED

As voted by the readers. Go to nintendo.com/mostwanted and let your voice be heard!

Wii

1. Super Smash Bros. Brawl
2. Metroid Prime 3: Corruption
3. Super Mario Galaxy
4. Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: Crystal Bearers
5. Fire Emblem



Nintendo DS

1. The Legend of Zelda: Phantom Hourglass
2. Kirby: Squeak Squad
3. Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: Ring of Fates
4. Custom Robo Arena
5. Mega Man Star Force

Check this space next month for the

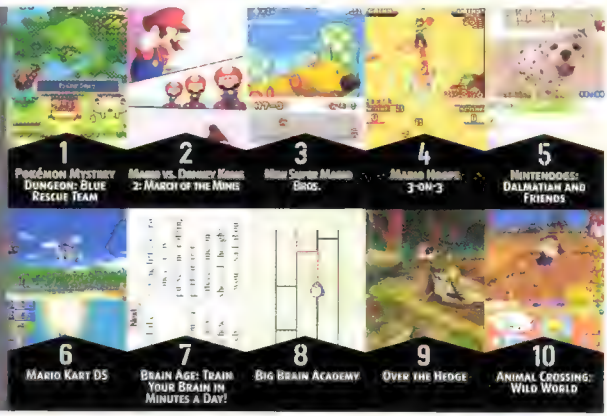
I'm sure we know what the number-

1. [illegible]
2. LEGO Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy
3. LEGO Star Wars
4. Madden NFL 07
5. Avatar: The Last Airbender
6. Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door
7. Super Mario Strikers
8. Mario Kart: Double Dash!
9. Open Season
10. Super Smash Bros. Melee

Game Boy Advance Thanks to a new crop of Player's Choice titles, Pokémon

1. [illegible]
2. Pokémon FireRed
3. Pokémon LeafGreen
4. Pokémon Emerald
5. Super Mario Advance
6. [illegible]
7. LEGO [illegible] Trilogy
8. Mario Kart: Super Circuit
9. Over the Hedge
10. Cars

Nintendo DS Congrats to Over the Hedge, the only non-Nintendo-published game on the list.



1. Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Blue Rescue Team
2. Mario vs. Donkey Kong 2: March of the Minis
3. New Super Mario Bros.
4. Mario Hoops 3-on-3
5. Nintendogs: Dalmatian and Friends
6. Mario Kart DS
7. Brain Age: Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day!
8. Big Brain Academy
9. Over the Hedge
10. Animal Crossing: Wild World

Sales data courtesy of the NPDFunworld TRSTS Video Game Source

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Leather meets magic in the follow-up to the best-selling Castlevania DS adventure, Dawn of Sorrow. Take control of Jonathan, a young vampire hunter and Charlotte, a powerful spellcaster and journey through magical portals created within Dracula's castle. Defeat twin vampire sisters, an ancient vampire lord and uncover the mysteries of a noble spirit trapped within the accursed walls.

Wi-Fi

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NINTENDO DS.

BEST OF E3 2006 NOMINEE

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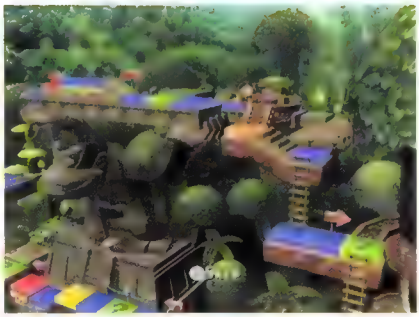
PARTY OF EIGHT

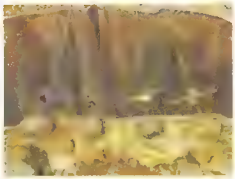
Spring Fling

Nintendo's Mario Party series moves to a new venue in March with Mario Party 8 for Wii.

Wii Sports, Rayman Raving Rabbids, and Super Monkey Ball: Banana Blitz have already invited players, four at a time, to strap in for motion-controlled minigame mayhem on Wii. This spring, Mario Party 8 will put its own stamp on the point-and-move rave with a collection of six game boards and dozens of minigames, each using the Wii remote to let you throw down with your pals. The game structure is pure Mario Party. Players select from 14 Mushroom Kingdom residents (including new invitees Hammer Bro and Blooper) and challenge each other to board-game battles. Minigames allow participants to earn coins and show their stuff while vying for Stars in two-on-two, three-on-one, and every-man-for-himself showdowns. In Treacherous Tightrope players hold the remote as if it were a balancing pole while their characters cross a windswept canyon. Crank to Rank rewards the player who can raise a flag first by turning the remote as if it were a flagpole crank. Other games have players racing vehicles by using a variety of tilt-to-turn control schemes, pointing and shooting at targets via the remote, and employing the Control Pad to make characters avoid obstacles or pick up objects.

Game boards include multilevel monstrosity DK's Treetop Temple and the sprawling Goomba's Booty Boardwalk. When it's your turn, your character lets out an exclamation via your remote's speaker, letting you know it's time for your to shake the remote to hit the dice block and get moving. Candy powerups transform characters into bowling balls, springs and vampires. It sounds like a sweet play. —George S.



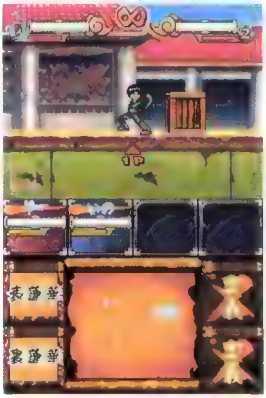


Mario and Luigi are well-balanced characters, but Wario and Yoshi are a bit off-kilter. You'd be dizzy too after playing a few dozen minigames in a row.

Sequel-Style Jutsu

Exclusive! Tomy casts its Sharingan Eye toward the DS this spring with Naruto: Ninja Council 3.

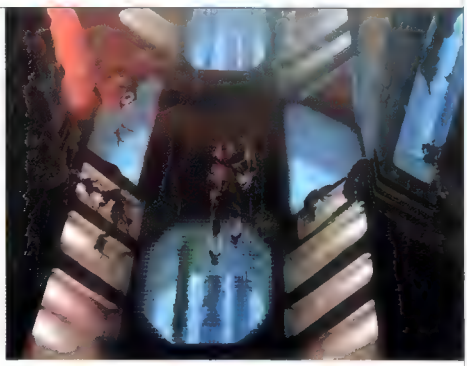
If you're a fan of Naruto, the [illegible] probably aware that the franchise has more characters than a Tokugawa-era [illegible]. Unfortunately, the Naruto [illegible] Ninja Council [illegible] for GBA have given you only a handful of playable [illegible] who could toss the old shuriken around. But don't get your metal-plated headband in a bunch just yet—the forthcoming Naruto: Ninja Council 3 for DS will give you control of more than 20 ninjas during dozens of discrete missions. The abundance of characters isn't just a sop to fans; you'll need to pick wisely from their ranks to complete the mission scenarios. Although you can take only one character into each mission, you can pick four special techniques from other characters to use when the chips are down, according to Tomy senior marketing manager Laura Yoshioka. [illegible] the special attacks are activated or manipulated using the touch screen—much [illegible] phase of the DS [illegible] exception, [illegible] thumb across the screen to summon Gamabunta, [illegible] into the microphone to increase the power of Sasuke's Fire Style Jutsu. —Drew W.



Alien Resurrection

Arcade action gets an upgrade in Alien Syndrome for Wii, an all-new action-RPG based on Sega's coin-op classic.

Twenty years after the arcade release, Sega and Totally Games (the developer responsible for much of the *Star Wars*: X-Wing series for PC) are reviving run-and-gun arcade title Alien Syndrome for release on Wii. Though it looks to be set in the same sci-fi universe as the original, Alien Syndrome for Wii is not a remake. It will follow an original story led by a new heroine, Aileen, as she battles hordes of aliens through 30 unique levels. The game will also include many action-RPG elements, such as upgrading weapons, buying and selling items, and learning abilities. While Sega promises that the single-player campaign will be worthwhile, we're more excited about the multiplayer mode, which will allow up to four players to blast alien baddies together. Expect Alien Syndrome to land on Wii this summer. —Andy M.



To take on Alien Syndrome's slimy invaders, you'll pack heat in the form of flamethrowers, tri-gun lasers, and nanobot swarms.

Monsters 'n' Metal

Publishers ready games for next year's summer blockbusters.

TRANSFORMERS

Based on the upcoming Michael Bay flick, Transformers will let you play as either the heroic Autobots or evil Decepticons. Each 'bot will come equipped with unique weapons, moves, and transformations. Activision is planning a Wii version and two DS versions of the game.

SHREK THE THIRD

Activision is also working on Wii, DS, and GBA titles based on Shrek the Third. Shaba Games will handle Wii development, while Vicarious Visions lends its talents to the handheld incarnations.

IRON MAN

The forthcoming Iron Man movie will get the video game treatment courtesy of Sega. Specific platforms have yet to be revealed, however.

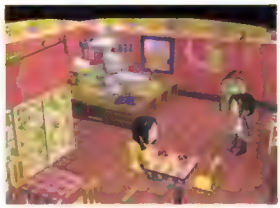
NEWS FROM JAPAN!

Home Economics

New simulation titles will let Japanese gamers live life as an adorable Sim or enjoy all the thrills of stock-trading without blowing their life savings and ending up living in a cardboard box.

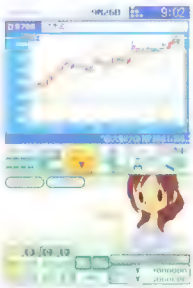
My Sims

Electronic Arts may be an unstoppable behemoth on this side of the Pacific, but the publisher has never been able to attain the same level of success in Japan. Hoping to change that, the company has announced My Sims: the new Wii-exclusive installment in the popular life-simulation franchise is designed to better appeal to Japanese tastes. Little is known about the project at this point, but the aesthetic is much more stylized than previous installments, with characters that look a bit like LEGO figures. —Steve T.



Kabushiki Baibai Trainer Kabutore & Stock Trader Shun

If Konami and Capcom's upcoming DS offerings are an indication of the market, the next craze to hit Japan is going to be the stock-trading genre. Capcom's Stock Trader Shun is a dramatic character- and story-driven game set in the world of high-stakes finance—sort of like Phoenix Wright on Wall Street. Konami's Kabushiki Baibai Trainer Kabutore, on the other hand, is a reality-based simulator that uses authentic stock data to train players in the basics of stock trading. Noriaki Okamura, who produced the Metal Gear PSP games, is producing Kabutore as well, but there's no word on whether you can snap rival traders' necks. —Chris H.



If Kabushiki Baibai Trainer Kabutore's plentiful charts and graphs can't prepare you for the world of finance, nothing will.

Stock Trader Shun is overflowing with anime style.

Tamagotchi for Mayor

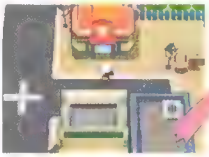
Namco Bandai's entrepreneurial critters leave the business sector to run for public office in Tamagotchi: Party On! for Wii.

Not to be left off of the Wii party-game bandwagon, those grotesquely adorable Tamagotchi will join the festivities next spring with Tamagotchi: Party On! Developed by h.a.n.d. Inc., the game puts a unique twist on the genre—you and up to three friends will be competing not for mere bragging rights, but to become the next mayor of Tamagotchi City. The town essentially acts as the playing board, and the minigames are divided into two categories: those that earn you popularity and those that raise money for your campaign. You can use those funds to buy items and customize your own campaign headquarters, or wager them on special slot games that allow you to take money and popularity away from your opponents. Because all political races should be determined by gambling. —Steve T.

Springtime for Pokémon

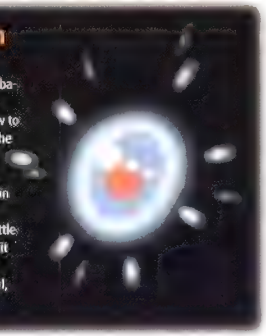
The word is out: Pokémon Diamond and Pearl are headed to North America in 2007! Here's what we know now.

Finally! After months of speculation and rumor, Pokémon Diamond and Pearl have arrived in North America. The latest Pokémon RPG titles bring the traditional Pokémon RPG that takes place in a region called Sinnoh to DS, pretty much the same as the GBA Pokémon games. Also, you'll be able to trade Pokémon between Ruby, Sapphire, Emerald, FireRed, LeafGreen, Diamond, Pearl, and Platinum. Pokémon, and Pokémon Ranger: The Masked



Get Your Egg On

If you've played through Pokémon Ranger, you're probably aware of the bonus missions. Information about how to access one of the missions, the Manaphy Egg mission, has yet to be revealed—keep your eyes on Pokémon.com in the near future. While the Manaphy Egg may seem a little useless in Pokémon Ranger, it does have a specific use in Pokémon Diamond and Pearl, and it can be....



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GAME WATCH FORECAST

We have some eclectic additions to the forecast this month. Next year is already shaping up to be huge, and we expect many, many more announcements after the holidays—especially for Wii and DS.

Wii

Battalion Wars 2	Nintendo	●●
Big Brain Academy	Nintendo	●●
The Bigs	2K Sports	●
Blazing Angels: Squadrons of WW II	Ubisoft	●●
Blitz: The League	Midway	●●
Bust-A-Move Bash™	Majesco	●
Chicken Little: Ace in Action	Buena Vista	●●●
Cooking Mama: Cook Off	Majesco	●
Disaster: Day of Crisis	Nintendo	●●
Dragon Quest Swords: The Masked Queen and the Tower of Mirrors	Square Enix	●●
Elebits	Konami	●●●
Far Cry: Vengeance	Ubisoft	●●●
Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: Crystal Bearers	Square Enix	●●
Fire Emblem	Nintendo	●●
The Godfather	EA	●
Harvest Moon Wii®	Natsume	●●
Heatseeker	Codemasters	●●
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	Vivendi	●●●
Mario Party 8™	Nintendo	●●
Mario Strikers: Charged	Nintendo	●●
Medal of Honor: Airborne	EA	●●
Meet the Robinsons	Buena Vista	●●
Metroid Prime 3: Corruption	Nintendo	●●
Mortal Kombat: Armageddon	Midway	●●
Need for Speed: Carbon	EA	●●●
One Piece: Unlimited Adventure	Namco Bandai	●●
Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones	Ubisoft	●●
Project H.A.M.M.E.R	Nintendo	●●
Rapala Tournament Fishing	Activision	●●●
Shrek the Third	Activision	●
Sonic and the Secret Rings	Sega	●●
SSX™	EA	●
Super Mario Galaxy	Nintendo	●●
Super Smash Bros. Brawl	Nintendo	●●
Super Swing Golf	Tecmo	●●●
Tamagotchi: Party On!	Namco Bandai	●●
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles™	Ubisoft	●
Tiger Woods PGA Tour®	EA	●
Transformers: The Game	Activision	●
WarioWare: Smooth Moves	Nintendo	●●●
Wii Play	Nintendo	●●
World Series of Poker: Tournament of Champions	Activision	●●●

Nintendo DS

A Boy and His Blob	Majesco	●●
Arthur and the Invisibles	Atari	●●
Asphalt: Urban GT 2	Ubisoft	●●
Biker Mice from Mars	American Game Factory	●
Brain Boost: Beta Wave	Majesco	●●●
Brain Boost: Gamma Wave	Majesco	●●●

The Start of a Wii-volution

North American Wii launch is a huge success.

If you're reading this magazine, then doubtless you already know that Wii launched in North America on Nov. 19 to eager crowds and massive acclaim. Nintendo of America president Reggie Fils-Aime kicked off the celebration by personally selling the first Wii at a midnight launch event at Toys "R" Us in New York City's Times Square. Within eight days of Wii's launch, consumers bought more than 600,000 Wii systems, along with 454,000 copies of The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess.

Mickey Hearts Mario

Disney makes strong commitment to Wii and DS development

The Disney-owned Buena Vista Games has announced that it will establish a new development house dedicated entirely to Wii and DS. The as-of-yet-unnamed studio will be based in Salt Lake City, and will create new franchises as well as games based on existing Disney properties. "This studio will be one of our centers of creative excellence," said Graham Hopper, Buena Vista's VP and general manger. "It gives us the ability to fully capitalize on our properties and expand our market share on Nintendo platforms."

Announced / In Development / Ready for Release

Game Title — Publisher ●●●

Game Title — Publisher ●●● — New games added to the list

Carl Mania	Majesco	●●
California Games	System 3	●●
Camelitry	TBA	●●
Cartoon Network Racing	American Game Factory	●●
Chibi Robo: Park Patrol	Nintendo	●●
Chronos Twin	Lexicon	●●
Code Lyoko	American Game Factory	●
Custom Robo Arena	Nintendo	●●
Death, Jr. and the Science Fair of Doom	Konami	●●
Digimon World DS	Namco Bandai	●●●
DK King of Swing DS	Nintendo	●●
Drake & Josh	THQ	●
DS Air	Nintendo	●●
Dynasty Warriors	Koei	●●
Etrian Odyssey	Atlus	●●
Europa Universalis II	Pocket PC	●●
F-22 Stealth Fighter	Majesco	●●
Final Fantasy XII Revenant Wings	Square Enix	●●
Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: Ring of Fates	Square Enix	●●
Fullmetal Alchemist: Dual Sympathy	Destineer	●●●
GoPets	Konami	●●
Hamsterz Life	Ubisoft	●●●
Hardcore Pool	UFO Interactive	●●
Hotel Dusk: Room 215	Nintendo	●●
Impossible Mission	System 3	●●
Indiana Jones 2007	LucasArts	●
Inuyasha: Secret of the Divine Jewel	Namco Bandai	●●
Izuna: Legend of the Unemployed Ninja	Atlus	●●
Kim Possible: Global Gemini	Buena Vista	●●
Kirby: Squeak Squad	Nintendo	●●●
Konami Classic Series: Arcade Hits	Konami	●●
Legend of the River King	Natsume	●
The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords	Nintendo	●
The Legend of Zelda: Phantom Hourglass	Nintendo	●●
Lionel Trains: On Track	Destination	●●●
Lost in Blue 2	Konami	●●
Lunar Knights	Konami	●●
Marvel Trading Card Game	Konami	●●
Meet the Robinsons	Buena Vista	●
Mega Man Star Force	Capcom	●●
Meteos: Disney Magic	Buena Vista	●●
Monster Bomber	Majesco	●●●
Monster Rancher	Tecmo	●
Moonlight Fables	Majesco	●
Nanostray 2	IBD	●●
Naruto: Ninja Council 3	D3PA	●●
One Piece	Namco Bandai	●●
Panzer Tactics DS	CDV Software	●●
Paws & Claws: Pet Vet	THQ	●●
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney: Justice for All	Capcom	●●●
Pokémon Diamond	Nintendo	●●
Pokémon Pearl	Nintendo	●●
Princess Natasha: Student Secret Agent: Princess	Destination	●●
Puzzle de Harvest Moon	Natsume	●●
Puzzle Test Challenge: All the Subjects	D3PA	●●
Quad Desert Fury 2	Majesco	●
Rafa Nadal Tennis	Codemasters	●●
Rayman Raving Rabbids	Ubisoft	●●
Shrek Smash and Crash Racing	Activision	●●
Shrek the Third	Activision	●
SNK vs. Capcom Card Fighters DS	SNK	●●
Spectrobes	Buena Vista	●●
Spider-Man: Battle for New York	Activision	●●●
Star Wars: Lethal Alliance	Ubisoft	●●●
Steel Horizon	Konami	●●
Superman Returns: The Videogame	EA	●●●
Top Gear: Downforce	Kemco	●●●
Transformers: The Game	Activision	●
Trioncube	Namco Bandai	●●
Ultimate Brain Games	Telegames	●●
Ultimate Card Games	Telegames	●●
Ultimate Pocket Games	Telegames	●●
Undercover: Dual Motives	Anaconda	●
Wario: Master of Disguise	Nintendo	●●
Winning Eleven: Pro Evolution Soccer 2007	Konami	●●
Xiaolin Showdown	Konami	●●●
Yu Gi Oh! Spirit Caller	Konami	●●
Zendoku	Eidos	●●
Zoey 101	THQ	●

Nintendo GameCube

Backyard Baseball 2007	Atari	●●
Backyard Basketball 2007	Atari	●
Backyard Football 2007	Atari	●
Foodfight!	Global Star	●●
The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess	Nintendo	●●●
Mini Golf Mayhem	Crave	●
Shrek Smash & Crash Racing	Activision	●●
World Championship Poker	Crave	●●
Zatch Bell! Mamodo Fury	Namco Bandai	●●●

Game Boy Advance

Arthur and the Invisibles	Atari	●●
ATV: Thunder Ridge Riders	Destination	●●
Camp Lazlo: Leaky Lake Games	Crave	●●
Danny Phantom: Urban Jungle	THQ	●●
Drake & Josh	THQ	●
Family Feud	Global Star	●●
Final Fantasy VI Advance	Nintendo	●●
Foodfight!	Global Star	●●
Ghost a Der	2K Games	●
Hardcore Pool	UFO Interactive	●●
Hot Wheels: All Out	Destination	●●
Hugo: Bukkazoom	Namco Bandai	●●
Koala Brothers: Outback Adventures	American Game Factory	●●
Legend of the River King: Advance	Natsume	●●
Little Einsteins	Buena Vista	●●
Meet the Robinsons	Buena Vista	●
Metal Slug	SNK	●●
Monster Truck Mayhem	Destination	●●
Pirate Battle	Orbital	●●
Polarium Advance	Atlus	●●●
The Proud Family	Disney	●●
Santa Claus Saves the Earth	Telegames	●●
Shrek Smash and Crash Racing	Activision	●●
Shrek the Third	Activision	●
Spider-Man: Battle for New York	Activision	●●
Super Robot Monkey Team Hyperforce Go!	Disney	●
Superman Returns: The Videogame	EA	●●
Ultimate Pocket Games	Telegames	●●
Ultimate Puzzle Games	Telegames	●●
Ultimate Table Games	Telegames	●●
Uno 52	Destination	●●●
Uno Freefall	Destination	●●●
VeggieTales: LarryBoy and the Bad Apple	Crave	●●
W.I.T.C.H.	Buena Vista	●
World Poker Tour 2K5	2K Sports	●
World Reborn	Destination	●●
X Blades: Inline Skater	Crave	●●
Xyanide	Playlogic	●
Zoey 101	THQ	●

Finally, a dungeon RPG strong enough for a man...

LEGEND OF THE UNEMPLOYED NINJA

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EVERYONE 10+
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Mild Fantasy Violence
Mild Language
Mild Suggestive Themes
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

NINTENDO DS.

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SUPER SMASH BROS. Brawl

Wii SMASH FILES #07

FIRST GAME APPEARANCE:
Kirby's Adventure - NES (1993)

KNOWN FOR:
Chivalry, swordsmanship, stubby limbs

BIOGRAPHY:
Meta Knight's classified as a bad guy, but he's a bad guy with a code of honor. Unlike most of Kirby's foes, this mysterious swordsman believes in a fair fight—and considering his speed, agility, and substantial combat skills, it's not hard to understand why. In spite of his chivalry, Meta Knight has been known to use his minions to test his adversaries' strength, and he has no qualms about entering battle with his flying battleship, the *Halberd*, when necessary. Although Meta Knight has been a playable character in some Kirby games, Brawl will let the armored warrior truly test his skills against his puffy pink rival. Only time will tell if Meta Knight will one day reveal his true agenda.

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Wii

UBISOFT

New looks for a new year: Wario's incognito, puzzle games get a new guise, and coin-ops go slim.

Custom Robo Arena Pg. 27
Konami Classic Series: Arcade Hits Pg. 26
Lunar Knights Pg. 28
Puzzle Quest: Challenge of the Warlords Pg. 26
Trioncube Pg. 28
Wario: Master of Disguise Pg. 25
Wii Play Pg. 24

Pick Up and Play

> Wii PLAY

PLATFORM: Wii • PUBLISHER: Nintendo
DEVELOPER: Nintendo • RELEASE: January 2007

Following in the wake of Wii Sports, a second collection of Mii-injected minigames—Wii Play—is just around the corner. Wii Play contains nine minigames, each one playable in either one- or two-player mode. The minigames—Shooting Range, Find Mii, Table Tennis, Pose Mii, Laser Hockey, Billiards, Fishing, Charge!, and Tanks!—are not only easy to pick up and play, but also incredibly addictive, and each one showcases different uses of the Wii remote. Shooting Range, for instance, is a simple point-and-shoot gallery resembling NES classic Duck Hunt, while Charge! will have players holding the controller sideways (similar to Excite Truck) as they control macramé cows through a very strangely styled racing course.

While most of the games are basic concepts, some can also be very challenging. Billiards, for example, is a variation of standard nine-ball pool, and has quite a bit of depth. The Wii remote allows for an unprecedented amount of precision in terms of how hard you hit the ball and how much spin you put on it. And Tanks! starts off easy but becomes incredibly difficult as you use the Wii remote (with or without the nunchuk) to battle through its 100 levels. Other games are a breeze—Laser Hockey, for instance, is about as simple an idea as they come, though the ability to twist your paddle makes its two-player mode very high-energy.

There's something for everyone in Wii Play, and the fact that the game comes stock with a Wii remote (an accessory that, on its own, will set you back 40 dollars) only sweetens the deal. You won't find an incredibly deep gaming experience in Wii Play, but if you're looking for quick and easy fun, a second Wii remote, and infinite replay value, Wii Play is the ticket. —Andy M.

A racing game even your grandma will enjoy

Sadly, the laughing dog is nowhere to be found.

Wario Wear

>WARIO: MASTER OF DISGUISE

PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
DEVELOPER: SUZAK • RELEASE: MARCH 2007

It's usually pretty easy to pick Wario out of a crowd. The bizarro Mario's garlic-clove nose and crooked mustache are dead giveaways. In Wario: Master of Disguise, the greedy guy shucks his usual image in favor of eight disguises and uses them to steal priceless treasure. The game plots 10 heists, each presented as an episode of Wario's favorite TV show. Wario has stolen the protagonist's quick-change wand, which allows him to switch from one disguise to the next with a flick of the stylus. After you draw a symbol that signifies the desired costume, Wario switches to the outfit in a puff of smoke. Every costume gives the law-breaker a different set of abilities. The Thief Wario disguise, for example, allows Wario to jump high and charge through enemies when you tap the DS touch screen. The master becomes Cosmic Wario when you draw a circle around his head. The spaceman is able to make long, low-gravity jumps and fire a laser. You trigger the laser by tapping its target on the touch screen. Other disguises include the floating Captain Wario costume (swipe with the stylus to make him paddle) and the Dragon Wario outfit (touch targets to engulf them in fire). While Wario ventures to claim the ultimate treasure, an artifact that grants wishes, he zips through a cruise ship, sunken ruins, a pyramid, and seven more exotic destinations. The puzzles that he encounters in each location are variations of eight touch-controlled minigames. The thieving begins in March. —GEORGE S.

Transmitting directly from Wario's brain

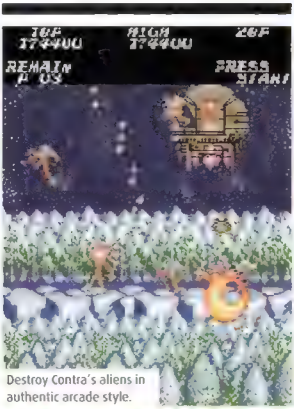
Wario rocks the boat in his latest misadventure

Quarter Hoarders

>KONAMI CLASSIC SERIES: ARCADE HITS

PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: KONAMI
DEVELOPER: KONAMI RELEASE: MARCH 2007

Wanna party like it's 1985? Then look no further than Konami Classic Series: Arcade Hits. With more than 12 games from the heyday of arcades, Arcade Hits lets you do it all—blast aliens in Contra, pilot the *Vic Viper* in Gradius, break world records in Track & Field, battle one-on-one in Yie Ar Kung-Fu, walk the tightrope in Circus Charlie, fight for freedom in Rush'n Attack, fly through enemy airspace in Scramble, and more. Even though these coin-op classics are scaled down in terms of screen size, they pack just as much fun on the DS as they did in the arcade; judging by what we've played so far, each game looks and plays identically to its original version—the old-school run-and-gun action of Contra is especially addictive. Additionally, the games are packed with tons of features to maximize your enjoyment, including difficulty and control options, a wide variety of aspect-ratio settings, a record-and-replay ability, and bonus archives like art and music galleries. Your friends can even get in on the action through wireless two-player modes and downloadable game trials. —CHRIS H.



Destroy Contra's aliens in authentic arcade style.

Before Gradius, there was Scramble.

Explore a whole kingdom full of puzzle goodness

Mind & Magic

>PUZZLE QUEST: CHALLENGE OF THE WARLORDS

PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: D3PA
DEVELOPER: INFINITE INTERACTIVE • RELEASE: SPRING 2007

At a glance, Puzzle Quest seems like it came straight from the dungeon-master's guide to traditional fantasy role-playing: you choose a hero from one of four character classes (druid, knight, wizard, warrior), you equip yourself with an assortment of weapons and armor, you learn new spells and increase in HP as you level up, and you use a 2-D map to explore a world steeped in lore, where you'll visit cities like Gildor and Elenia and hear of events like the Banewars.

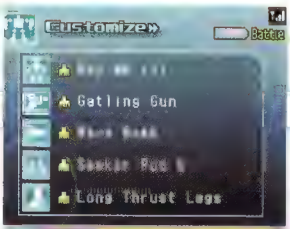
The twist? Instead of fighting monsters sword-to-sword, you engage in turn-based battles of wits in which you square off by matching tokens on an eight-by-eight grid. Who knew that skeletons and giant spiders were so intellectual? By matching up tokens in lines of three or more, you can acquire mana (for casting spells), earn extra experience points or cash, or, most important, inflict damage on your opponent. In addition to a full-fledged quest mode, the game features exhibition matches and versus competition. —CHRIS H.

Robot Love

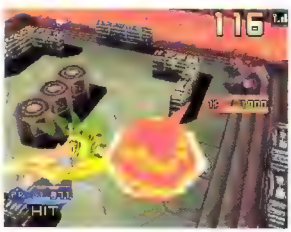
>CUSTOM ROBO ARENA

PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
DEVELOPER: NOISE
RELEASE: MARCH 2007

You're the new kid in a school filled with robo commanders, and you desperately need to fit in. Do you run for student body president? Dress provocatively? Throw a big party at the water park with daddy's money? No! You show how courageous and clever you are in a series of robo battles against other students. Then you branch out and fight ever more desperate robo battles that require you to trick out your faithful robo with the newest and coolest options. Or maybe you don't really care all that much about the obligatory story mode, and you just want to battle up to three other robots online or through a local wireless connection. You may be the type who wants to fire up the Rumble Pack and get into the "holosseum" with your gun, bomb launcher, and pod pack. Custom Robo Arena is all about selecting parts, polishing your handiwork with a virtual rag, and fighting. The battles are fast, brutal and certain to satisfy your irrational lust for destroying tiny robots. The possible means of inflicting such destruction are truly mind-numbing; your robo will try on more accessories than a banker's wife at Neiman Marcus. In fact, you'll spend so much time doting on your little robo—posing it, shopping for it, selecting victory dances—your Nintendog may disown you. —DREW W.



Why don't you polish *this*, robo commander?



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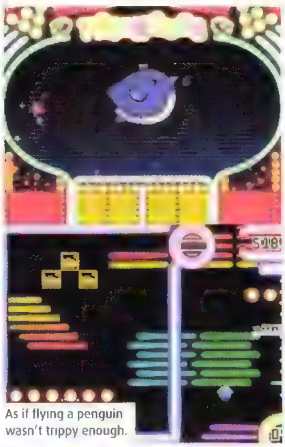
Space Odd-yssey

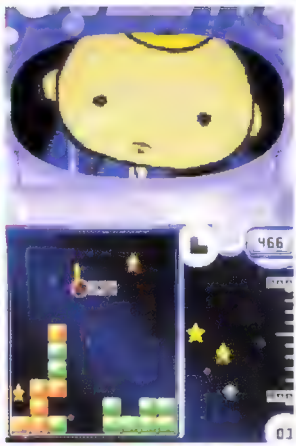
>TRIONCUBE

PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: NAMCO BANDAI
DEVELOPER: NAMCO • RELEASE: FEBRUARY 2007

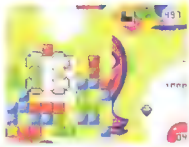
The premise behind Trioncube—the latest puzzler from producer Hideo Yoshizawa (Mr. Driller, Pac-Pix)—is rather bizarre. As the captain of a penguin-shaped rocket ship named the *Penko*, you're tasked with rescuing a kidnapped princess from Hell Metal, a nefarious yet adorable space monster who resides on the nonplanet Pluto. To fuel your vessel, you must arrange Tetris-style falling blocks into 3x3 squares, or Trion Cubes. The more Trion Cubes you chain together, the faster the *Penko* will reach its destination. Once you break the chain (or finish the stage), all of the blocks turn into coins—which you can use to purchase new backgrounds or special effects—and disappear. Someone tell our top scientists to get to work on this promising alternative fuel source immediately! Does ethanol produce hard currency when it's burned? I don't think so!

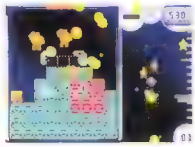
Namco Bandai seems to be aiming Trioncube primarily at youngsters and those who don't have a lot of experience with puzzle games. It's pretty simple, and the pace isn't nearly as frenetic as something like Tetris Attack or Meteos. —STEVE T.





As if flying a penguin wasn't trippy enough.





Do you want the thunder or the lightning?

May the Sun Be with You

>LUNAR KNIGHTS

PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: KONAMI
DEVELOPER: KOJIMA PRODUCTIONS
RELEASE: FEBRUARY 2007

In Volume 208 we took an early survey of Lunar Knights, a brooding action-adventure coming to DS. Now that we've had some hands-on time with the English version of the game, we have a better understanding of how its many elements fit together. Lunar Knights takes place in a world where vampires have wrested power away from the humans; headed up by a vampire called The Duke, the blood-suckers are rounding up the humans one by one to turn them into zombies. The vampires have developed a mechanism to control the weather, and learned how to block the sun's rays. To kill the vampires, you'll have to incapacitate them then fly them high above the stifled atmosphere, where the sun can purify them. When you do, little sprites called terrennials that were trapped inside the vampires will be set free and will join you on your mission to get to The Duke. As more and more vampires are killed you'll be able to better control the weather, and turn the vampires' evil designs against them. Pair this thrilling plot with deep RPG-laden gameplay and an incredible weather system, and you'll be looking at a must-have title come this February. —CHRIS S.

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Did I Just See That?

Take a stance for unconventional gameplay with Wii microgame masterpiece WarioWare: Smooth Moves.

By George Sinfield

atching the action unfold

We described the forms in detail in our "All the Right Moves" article

Perfect Form

Wario's not evil. He's just misunderstood. At the beginning of the single-player game, the antihero goes in search of treats and ends up unearthing an ancient treasure--the Form Baton--in the Temple of Form, on the edge Diamond City. While the man takes off with the prize, temple traps spring and the first set of microgames begins. That's the order of business in the game story: characters get into a predicament, and you pitch in by completing microgames. After you survive the boss stage, the story is resolved. The misses that you can make are represented by something that is significant to the character. In Wario's case, garlic cloves appear on the screen between microgames. If you fail, one of the cloves disappears.

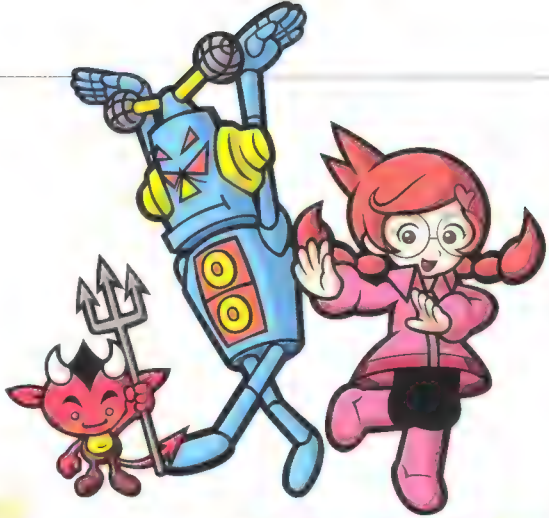
After Wario survives the temple with the Form Baton intact, cheerleader Mona (another WarioWare-series mainstay) steps in. In addition to Wario's Remote Control stance, Mona's microgames use two additional forms: the Umbrella and the Handlebar. Every time a form is introduced, the game slips into a quiet mood for a few moments to reflect on the new way that you'll interact with the Form Baton. An illustration shows the form and words describe it in a philosophical tone.

The story continues with new chapters from established characters, new characters, and a Wario reprise.

Dangers appear from all angles in Wario Fu, one of Wario's microgames. Your goal: survive.

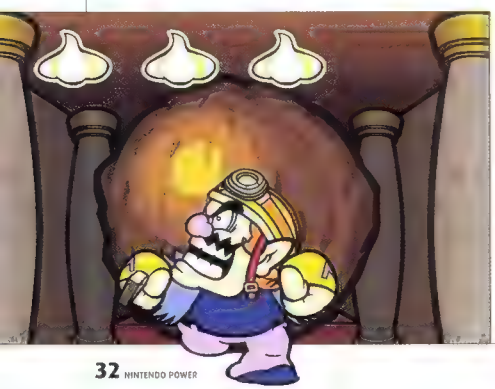
The Remote Control
Hold the Form Baton straight with the tip pointing forward. This simple stance reflects one of life's fiercest—and greatest—sports: channel surfing.

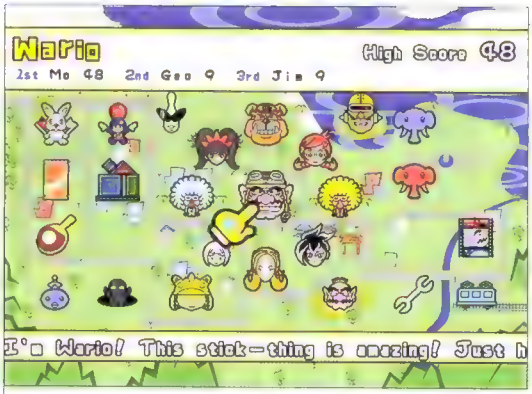
The Umbrella
Hold the Form Baton vertically, thumb resting lightly on the button. Through this stance, you channel the quiet dignity of a circus clown in the midst of a thunderstorm.



Each of the game's 19 forms uses the Wii remote, and one of them—The Diner—uses both the remote and the nunchuk (or the Balance Stone, as it's known in the game). With more than 200 microgames, each with a different goal, the game uses every aspect of the controller's motion sensitivity and pointing abilities, but shies away from standard button pushing. Some games make use of the A or B Button (in Talk to the Can, a button serves as a trigger for an insecticide spray can), but those cases are rare. The game also makes liberal use of the remote's speaker and rumble feature, giving you feedback for every swipe and stab. In the Cold Call game, you begin by leaving the remote face-down on a table. When the telephone on the screen rings and you lift the device to your ear (as if it were the telephone's handset), a voice from the speaker greets you. The Driver's Ed game, which closes out Kat and Ana's section, is a driving-themed boss stage. You hold the remote in the Chauffeur form (a hand on each end, and the face of the remote in front of you) and tilt it to steer. If you press the A or B Button, the car's horn sounds through the speaker. Big gestures and small touches marry the remote's functionality with the microgames, making for lots of surprises and funny gags.

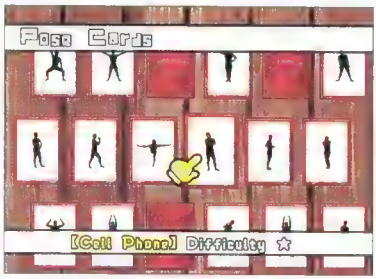
Hello? When you lift the remote in the Cold Call game, a voice speaks to you through the controller's speaker.





The Diamond City map is the game's main menu. It gives you access to each character's microgame collection, unlocked minigames, the Temple of Form, a cut-scene theatre, game options, and a train to the multiplayer section. If you zoom in, you'll see a bulletin board in the south end of town that imparts clues about the characters.

The Temple of Form acts as a hub for microgame management. It lets you revisit any microgame that you've unlocked, play through three increasingly difficult versions of the games, and adjust their time limits. The game list sorts by hosts and forms. If you open a host's entry, you'll see (by the blank spaces) how many microgames presented by that character remain. Return to the host's section on the Diamond City map and play through his or her selections. Eventually you'll unlock every game the character offers and make a star appear next to the character's picture in the Temple of Form. Pose Cards are another unlockable stored at the temple. The 81 silhouettes holding the remote, each in a titled stance, are different from the playing forms. The unveiling of the poses give you a breather when you're revisiting a game collection and have just passed through the boss stage.



Search by form or character in the Temple of Form to discover how many microgames remain locked

The Handlebar
Turn the Form Baton sideways and grasp the ends firmly in both hands. Like riding a bicycle, perfecting the stance gracefully requires grace, steadiness, and tight shorts.

The Sketch Artist
Hold the Form Baton as you would a pencil during a pop quiz, delicately but defiantly. Mastery of this move can change a pop quizzee into a pop quizzer.

Besides the innovative controller, another unique Wii feature is the customizable Mii avatars. WarioWare: Smooth Moves showcases your Mii in microgames and in multiplayer mode prominently. Wario Pt, one of WarioWare's microgames (and likely one of the first ones you'll see) tasks you with focusing a magnifying glass by moving the remote forward and back. When the image in the glass becomes clear, you'll see that it's your Mii. The Armed and Dangerous microgame depicts your Mii arm wrestling with another Mii. In Opening Night, after you successfully lead a video game-character orchestra, your Mii is revealed as the conductor.

Your Mii wears a tie and tails as the conductor of the Opening Night orchestra.

Top 5 Microgames that Ecourage You to Strap In

DID I JUST SEE THAT?

Everyone's In

After Wario's story comes to an end in the single-player game, the Diamond City train station opens. The train's destination is the Multiplayer area. Now that you've unlocked all of the remote forms (a form incorporating the nunchuk remains), you're ready to share your microgame-clearing skills with others. The multiplayer options unlock one at a time in a plaza area. After you complete one of the exercises, another becomes available. Four of the multiplayer activities are microgame competitions in which players take turns completing challenges (none of the games require more than a single Wii remote).

Survival invites up to 12 competitors in a single-elimination tournament. The participants' Miis appear as angels in a blue-sky background. When a player fails to clear his or her microgame, the corresponding Mii falls to earth. The last angel flying is declared the winner.

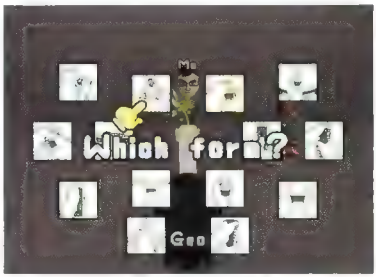
Balloon has its roots in the Balloon Bang contest from WarioWare, Inc.: Mega Party Game$ for the GCN. Up to five players take turns inflating a balloon (by making a pumping action with the remote) and clearing games. The player whose turn it is when the balloon explodes loses the game.

Bomb is Hot Potato for up to five players with the Form Baton as the potato. Microgame failure triggers a detonation.

In Lifeline, players take turns earning lifelines by completing microgames. After five rounds, representative Miis dangle over dangerous waters while the lifelines are cut, one at at time. The last Mii dangling wins.

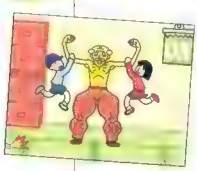
Competitors dangle in Lifeline. As you cut the lines above the pipe, they give way below the pipe.

All of the multiplayer microgame competitions select their games from the pool of unlocked exercises



After you complete a microgame in the Bomb category, you have a choice of stances for the next player to take.

Balloon puts you close to an inflating balloon. If you miss a microgame, you have to give it another try, increasing the chance that you'll be next to the balloon when it pops.



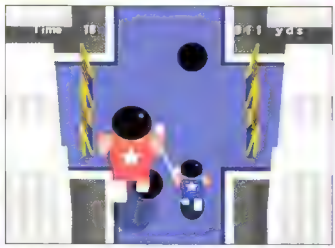
The Samurai
With your right hand, hold the Form Baton close to your left hip. Like a hungry samurai defending his lunch, close your eyes and await your enemy's attack.

The Waiter
Place the Form Baton in your palm, tip forward and buttons facing up. See yourself serving a group of socialites. Such grace, they cry! Such style! Such hors d'oeuvres!

The remaining multiplayer games are stand-along minigames. Two of them make use of the nunchuk for simultaneous play. The Star Nose game is a split-screen race between two noses through obstacle-filled caverns. One player uses the remote and the other one uses the nunchuk to control a nose through tilt control. The noses can pick up food power-ups along the way. As soon as one sniffer crashes, the other schnoz lands smack dab on a face in a painting.

The Bungee Buddies game has its roots in the three-legged race. Two runners are attached by a cord similar to the one that connects the nunchuk to the remote. As in Star Nose, one player holds the remote and the other one holds the nunchuk, to control a runner. When the players jump, their runners jump. Obstacles include holes and sandpits. When one runner falls into a hole, both runners stop. The object is to cover as much distance as possible within the time limit. When the game is over, the players are given titles that reflect their performance.

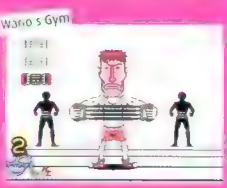
The last multiplayer game is a dart-throwing competition with the remote playing the part of the dart. The winner is the player who can score exactly 301 points first.



As your Bungee Buddy hops over one hole, you've got to prepare to leap over the next one.

PICKY, PICKY

Top 5 Microgames About Personal Grooming



Play On

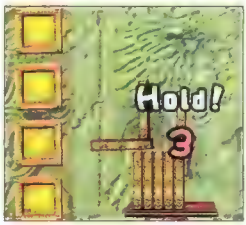
The more you play Smooth Moves, the more there is to play. After you complete Kat and Ana's section (which includes a tennis ball-bouncing microgame), the Tower Tennis minigame pops up. It challenges you to bounce a ping-pong ball on a paddle as you ascend a tower. You get points for every bounce until the ball gets away from you.

The Block Star minigame is a variation of Young Cricket's boss stage. It challenges you to stack blocks on a tray as they fall into the playing area. In the early stages, the blocks are squares and rectangles. Later, the blocks take on less-stackable shapes.

The Can Shooter game appears after you complete Ashley's section. It's a shooting gallery that starts with cans as targets then moves on to sticks of dynamite and missiles.

In Balloon Trip, you use the remote and the nunchuk to flap your arms and keep a balloon-strapped flier from sinking.

In Balloon Trip, you deal with dangers above and below.



After you load up the Block Star tray, you must hold it steady for three seconds.

In Tortoise & Hare, you follow instructions to lift and drop a pair of flags.

Every unlockable minigame is based on one of Smooth Moves's microgames. Ashley's Shoot the Breeze game inspired the Can Shooter game, which is much more elaborate and much more explosive than its predecessors

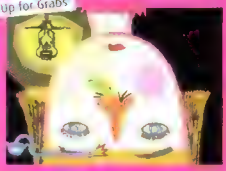
The Big Cheese
With the Form Baton at your hip, force your chest and hips forward. This stance honors the C.E.O., unsung hero standing proud on the backs of his employees.

The Mohawk
Point the tip of the Form Baton forward and hold it above your head. Letting the Form Baton fall is like letting a mohawk droop: shameful and forbidden.

Top 5 Microgames About Food

Over Easy

Up for Grabs



Yes, You Can

Sprinkler System

Dough Boy

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ZATCHBELL!

MAMODO FURY

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FIGHT WITH 20 DIFFERENT PLAYABLE TEAMS!

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T — TEEN — Fantasy Violence, Mild Language, Suggestive Themes — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

NINTENDO GAMECUBE. PlayStation 2 VIZ

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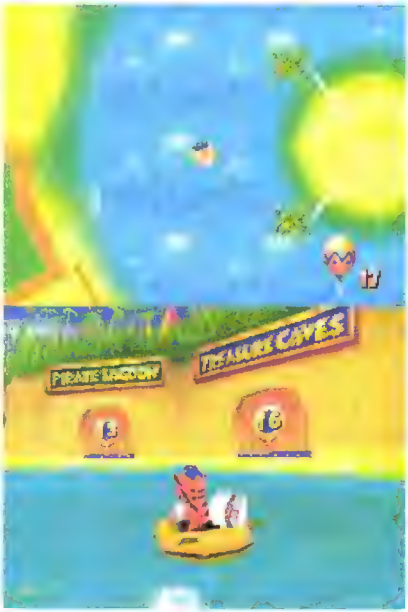
DIDDY DIDDY BANG BANG

Neither giant snowballs nor waterfalls nor dinosaurs nor gloom of night will stay these animal characters from the swift completion of their appointed rounds in Diddy Kong Racing DS, but missiles might.



Mario Kart 64 may have taken kart racing into the 3-D era, but it was Diddy Kong Racing that tossed it in the blender with adventure games and flying games to produce something fresh. Ten years later, Nintendo and Rare are building on that winning formula with an enhanced remake on the DS. Even if you played the original until you beat your chest and hair grew on your knuckles, you'll want to take a look at what Diddy and Timber are up to these days.

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

1997-2007 Nintendo. Certain characters licensed by Rare

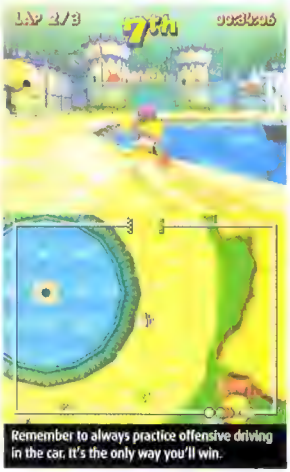
Character Counts

The core team of characters is back to save Timber's island from Wizpig's stompin' hooves, but a few faces have changed. Diddy's bringing his Donkin–Tiny and Daisy–in on the action to fill in the gaps left by Conker and Banjo. Taj the mystical blue pachyderm is also back to fulfill your every wish, as long as your wishes don't go much beyond training, upgrades, and unlocked content. Rub his magic lamp, and he'll also let you switch characters in the middle of your adventure–helpful if you're looking for someone who's quick off the line like Pipsy, or a high-speed cruiser like Krunch. For most races,

you'll probably end up sticking with balanced characters like Timber. All of the great character animation that you remember from the old game is in the new version, and it looks even better than you remember it: the textures–often supersaturated and blurry on the N64–are crisp and bright on the DS. You say you want more than a few new characters and a paint job? Read on

Ways and Means

There are three ways to get around in Diddy Kong Racing DS: cars, planes, and hovercraft. Cars are a blast to drive, and even allow you to drift around tight corners by power-sliding. Planes are fast and a bit more challenging to control. Hovercraft require you to think ahead and start your turn well before you reach a curve. After you collect coins in the races, you can head to Taj's tent to upgrade your r des. All of the vehicles make use of the DS's specia features to achieve a boost off the line at the start of a race: the car and plane require you to rub the touch screen; the hovercraft requires you to blow into the microphone



Remember to always practice offensive driving in the car. It's the only way you'll win.

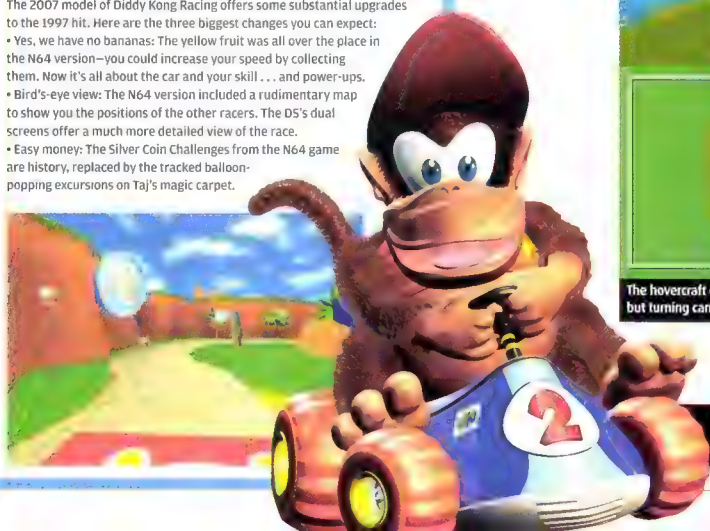
The plane is a blast to fly, but you'll need to practice before you become an ace pilot.

The hovercraft can cruise over water and land, but turning can be a challenge.

Diddy's Star Vehicle

The 2007 model of Diddy Kong Racing offers some substantial upgrades to the 1997 hit. Here are the three biggest changes you can expect:

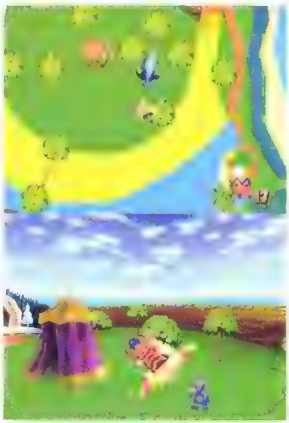
- Yes, we have no bananas: The yellow fruit was all over the place in the N64 version–you could increase your speed by collecting them. Now it's all about the car and your skill . . . and power-ups.
- Bird's-eye view: The N64 version included a rudimentary map to show you the positions of the other racers. The DS's dual screens offer a much more detailed view of the race.
- Easy money: The Silver Coin Challenges from the N64 game are history, replaced by the tracked balloon-popping excursions on Taj's magic carpet.



Diddy used to be fueled by bananas. Now he's all about the Benjamins.

Around the World

The races are so central to the classic Diddy Kong experience, it's easy to overlook that the game is structured like an adventure: you access different worlds from an overworld called Timber's Island. The island is a good place to practice your flying skills, upgrade your racing machines, and explore. After you enter the door to a new world—starting with the prehistoric Dino Domain—you can access



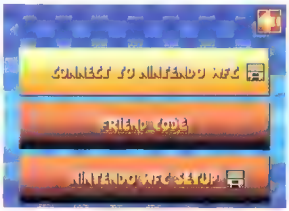
race doors to win balloons. The more balloons you collect, the more race doors you unlock. After you win all the individual races in a world, you can take on the boss (like Bluey the Walrus on Snowflake Mountain) then return to the races for a new challenge: a tracked, magic-carpet-ride challenge that requires you to pop balloons—and control the camera—on the touch screen using the stylus. Once you finish all the tasks in a world, you'll race for a trophy.

Pop So You Don't Stop

They may not be demented clowns or escaped serial killers, but these cute little characters employ a surprisingly sophisticated brand of vehicular combat. Power-ups are contained in color-coded balloons that hover over or near the courses. When you run over them, you can either use the power-up immediately or hold onto it and upgrade on the fly by grabbing one or two balloons of the same color.

For example, one red balloon will yield a single missile, two balloons give you a pack of five missiles, and three award you a fire-and-forget homing missile. The boosts, shields, hazards (oil slicks, etc.), and magnets all offer similar upgrades.

You'll need them, too. Once you get behind in a race, it's virtually impossible to catch up without laying the smack down.



A Posse for Diddy

Adventures are fun, but the burning question is, "How's the multiplayer?" The answer, we're pleased to report is, "very robust." Even the download option for multiple players on a single game card offers up all the tracks you've already opened in the single-player game. The local wireless option runs flawlessly, and you'll find the the races far more brutal when you're up against living, breathing opponents. If you can't assemble a local racing team, the Wi-Fi option is always there so you can tear it up over the Internet.

Back to the Races

The deep single-player experience and the many available multiplayer options make Diddy Kong Racing DS a perfect storm of replay value. We haven't even touched on the multiple boss races for each world, the secret characters, and the overworld puzzles. This February you'll find plenty of reasons to take a trip back to Diddy Kong country on the DS.

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Cartoon Violence
Crude Humor

ORDEAL OR NO DEAL

Beneath the Hyrulian desert lies the 50-level-deep Cave of Ordeals. Prepare to conquer one of The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess's toughest challenges.

By Chris Hoffman

TEEN T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
© 2006 Nintendo

Deep in the Desert

The Cave of Ordeals is located in the Gerudo Desert, directly next to the warp spot. Once you've used Midna to teleport the bridge segment back to Eldin Province, the cave entrance will be revealed.

Prepare for Battle

The enemies in the Cave of Ordeals don't drop hearts or ammunition when they're defeated, so prepare for the long battle by acquiring the quiver upgrades, Bomb Bag upgrades, and all four bottles before you enter the cave. Since you can't complete the cave until you've retrieved the Double Clawshots from the City in the Sky, you may wish to hold off on attempting the challenge until then.

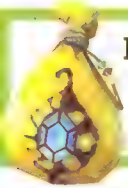
The Well-Stocked Hero

Bottles are essential for holding healing items. You can find four bottles in total; you'll acquire the first at the shop in Ordon Village; Coro, in Faron Woods, will sell you the second; Jovani will give you the third after you collect 20 Poe Souls; and you can find the fourth by bobber fishing on the west side of Hena's Fishing Hole near the "Don't Litter" sign. There are several Bomb Bags to acquire, as well. You can buy one in Barnes' Bomb Shop, receive another by helping Iza destroy the rocks blocking the river, and find a third by using a Water Bomb on a rock at the bottom of the Zora's throne room. You can also win the Giant Bomb Bag upgrade, which doubles the capacity of your Bomb Bags, by scoring 25 points on Iza's Rapid Ride. Arrows are very useful in the Cave of Ordeals, so max out your capacity by winning the STAR game in Castle Town twice to receive the Giant Quiver. You'll need the Double Clawshots to win.

Magical Assistance

In a tight spot, the impenetrable Magic Armor comes in very handy. The first step in getting the armor is to donate large sums of money to the Goron in Malo's shop in Kakariko Village. Once you've donated enough, Malo will buy out the overpriced shop in Castle Town. There, you can purchase the Magic Armor for 698 rupees. As long as you have rupees to power it, the armor will protect you from any hazard.

The Magic Armor is the best way to avoid taking damage in the cave's toughest levels. It's also a good backup if you're low on health and healing items.



Running on Rupees

Since the Magic Armor is powered by rupees, max out your cash capacity with the Giant Wallet—get it from Agitha in Castle Town by bringing her all 24 Golden Bugs. The enemies in the cave drop rupees to help keep the armor functioning.

The Start of an Ordeal

Once you're fully armed, you're ready to take on the Cave of Ordeals, which is packed with increasingly difficult enemies. On every 10th level, the Great Fairy will reward you for your efforts and offer to return you to the surface.

The First 10 Floors

Floor 1: The first floor contains only a single Bokoblin. Slay it with [illegible]. **Floor 2:** Use spin attacks to easily dispatch the rats and Keese. **Floor 3:** First slay the plant creature on the floor, then take out the ones on the ceiling individually by cutting their stems with the Gale Boomerang or Clawshot, then hitting them with your blade. **Floor 4:** Attack the Skulltulas as they prepare to strike. Use the spin attack if they surround you. **Floor 5:** Keep your shield drawn to block the archers' arrows, and stay near the walls for increased protection. Chase after the enemies and cut them down. **Floor 6:** Before you drop into the room, use the Clawshot to defeat the flaming enemies on the ceiling, then jump down and defeat the rest. **Floor 7:** The spin attack is your best bet—it will let you easily hit the weak spot on the Dodongo's tails and make short work of the Fire Keese. There's also a digging spot where you can unearth three hearts using Link's wolf form. **Floor 8:** Use your shield to avoid damage from the Tektites, then counter with spin attacks or jumping strikes. **Floor 9:** There are two archers hiding beneath the ledge; try to defeat them before fighting the Lizalfos. Use the Gale Boomerang to stun some of the enemies and provide an opportunity to hit them with your sword. **Floor 10:** There are no enemies on the 10th floor—just the Great Fairy. She'll drop a hint that you'll need the Spinner to get any farther, plus she'll release fairies at the Ordon Spirit Spring.

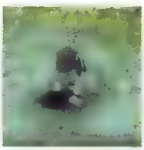
Use the Clawshot instead of the bow to conserve arrows for when you're deeper in the cave.

Look Before You Leap

The ledges that lead to each floor provide a vantage point for you to scope out the situation before jumping into the fray. Use the ledges to take out troublesome enemies with arrows, bomb arrows, or the Clawshot.

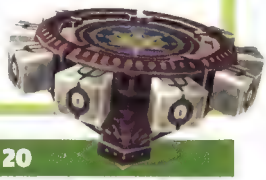
Animal Instincts

Link's human-form abilities are excellent for taking out enemies within the cave, but don't ignore his wolf form—Midna's Dark Energy charge attack is great for defeating multiple enemies at once. On some floors, you'll need to use the wolf's abilities to defeat certain foes, and by using the wolf's senses, you can find hearts and rupees buried underground.



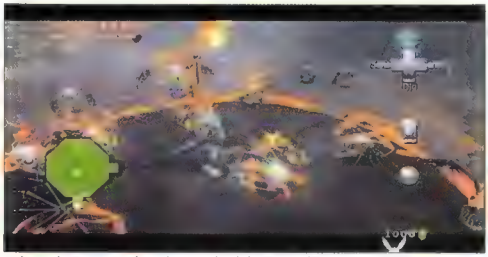
The Right Tools for the Job

On levels 11, 21, 31, and 41, you can't proceed unless you have the right items—the Spinner, ball and chain, Dominion Rod, and Double Clawshots respectively. If you discover you don't have the necessary equipment, use the Clawshot to return to the previous room, and talk to the Great Fairy to head back to the surface.



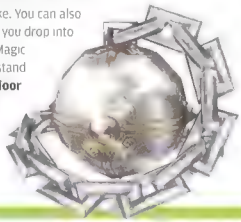
Floors 11 through 20

Floor 11: By using the Double Clawshots, you can hang from the ceiling and pluck the armor from the foes below. If you do this, however, the rats will congregate beneath you, so return to the ledge before leaping into the room and defeating the enemies with spin attacks. Use the Spinner to reach the door to the next room. **Floor 12:** Take out the Chus with the Clawshot. You should be able to hit them several times from the ledge, if not defeat them entirely. **Floor 13:** Pull the green enemies from their protective bubbles with the Clawshot and finish them off with your sword. Take them on one at a time. **Floor 14:** Turn into wolf form and use the Dark Energy charge attack to defeat numerous hovering skulls at once. You can also dig to find a 100-rupee prize. **Floor 15:** The wolf



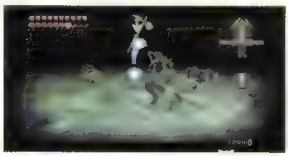
The Dark Energy attack works great for defeating multiple foes, but it takes a second to charge up. Unleash the move before an enemy interrupts it.

form's Dark Energy will make short work of the enemies on this floor, as well. **Floor 16:** The rats and Keese don't pose much of a threat. Use the wolf's senses if you're having trouble spotting some of the enemies. **Floor 17:** Use the wolf's Dark Energy attack to defeat the Stalhounds, then dispatch the Poe. **Floor 18:** Stand in the circle of Leevers and use human Link's spin attack to take them all out in one stroke. You can also dig up a heart in wolf form. **Floor 19:** After you drop into the room, Chus will swarm you. Equip the Magic Armor and fight them with your sword, or stand back and defeat them with the Clawshot. **Floor 20:** The Great Fairy on the 20th floor will release fairies at Faron Spring. She'll also provide a hint about the next item you need to proceed—the ball and chain.



Souled Out

When you reach a floor that contains a Poe, stay away from the ghoul and focus on defeating the other foes first. When they're gone, change to wolf form, activate your senses, and tear out the Poe's soul.



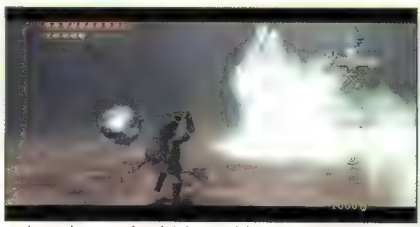
Floors 21 through 30

Floor 21: Use the Gale Boomerang to stun the enemies, then finish them off with spin attacks. With the enemies defeated, shatter the ice barrier with the ball and chain. **Floor 22:** Use spin attacks to defeat any nearby enemies, then switch to wolf form and activate your senses to see and destroy the phantom rats. Take out the other enemies with human Link's standard attacks. Before you leave, dig in the center of the chamber to find three hearts. **Floor 23:** You'll be assaulted by a whole mob of small skeletons. Use Dark Energy attacks or spin attacks to defeat them. **Floor 24:** Jump to the side of the room and keep your distance from the ReDeads. Defeat them with the ball and chain. **Floor 25:** Keep your shield up as the door opens to block the tower-based archer's attack. Back off and take out the archer with the Hawkeye-modded bow, then shoot some of the other archers from the ledge before jumping down and finishing off the rest with spin attacks. **Floor 26:** Bomb arrows will destroy the Stalfos with one hit. You can snipe them from the ledge or attack them from the floor. **Floor 27:** Stay near the chamber walls and destroy the hovering skulls. Once they're gone, take out the Skulltulas one by one: cut their web-threads with the boomerang then defeat them with your sword. Dig in wolf form to find a heart. **Floor 28:** The chamber is packed with Bokoblins and Lizalfos. Use the Gale Boomerang to keep the enemies at bay, and slay them with spin attacks. **Floor 29:** Drop into the chamber near the ledge and defeat the small skeletons with spin attacks. Once you approach the Stalfos, they'll come to life—take them down with bomb arrows. Defeat the remaining enemies with standard sword strikes. **Floor 30:** When you speak to the Great Fairy on the 30th floor, she'll release fairies at Eldin Spring in Kakariko Village. She'll also inform you that you'll need the Dominion Rod to continue.

The ball and chain lets you stay away from the ReDeads' paralyzing screams. It will usually hit them twice per attack.

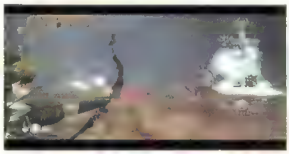
Floors 31 through 40

Floor 31: Stay on the ledge and use the bow to shoot the Beamos in their glowing weak spots, then jump down and defeat the bats. Use the Dominion Rod to move the two statues near the door and open the gate. **Floor 32:** Before you drop into the room, use your Clawshot to defeat the enemies on the ceiling. Keep your shield up and use spin attacks to defeat the remaining enemies. **Floor 33:** Stay near the walls of the room and slay the ReDeads with the ball and chain. Once they're gone, turn into wolf form and defeat the Poe. **Floor 34:** Stay near the wall as you drop into the room and let the phantom rats swarm you, then take them out in wolf form. When they're gone, walk to the center of the room to trigger the Chu onslaught; defeat them with the Clawshot. A digging spot contains a heart. **Floor 35:** Use the boomerang from the ledge to pull the icy bats within range, then defeat them with your sword. Afterward, destroy the Freezard with the ball and chain.



Lock onto the Freezards and circle around them to avoid their icy breath, then hit them with the ball and chain when they pause.

Floor 36: Either use the Back Slice against the icy spear-wielding skeletons, or equip the Magic Armor and use the ball and chain. **Floor 37:** A few spin attacks will make short work of the Leevers and icy skulls. **Floor 38:** This level is especially challenging, so you may wish to equip the Magic Armor. Use bombs or Back Slices from the ledge to defeat a few of the icy skeletons, then jump down and use Back Slices and spin attacks to take out the majority of foes. After the other enemies are gone, smash the Freezards with the ball and chain. **Floor 39:** Drop from the ledge and stay to one side of the room. Slowly approach one of the Darknuts to get its attention, and defeat it in sword-to-sword combat while staying away from the second Darknut. Take it on only after defeating the first one. A digging spot contains 200 rupees. **Floor 40:** The Great Fairy will release fairies to Lanayru's Spirit Spring and clue you in that you'll need the Double Clawshots to proceed.

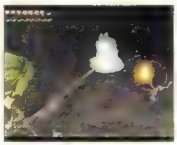


If you try to fight in the middle of the 38th floor, you'll be vulnerable to the Freezards' icy breath. Stay near the center of the north or south walls to avoid their chilly attacks.

Use the Back Slice to penetrate the Darknuts' defenses, then follow up with regular slashes. The Darknuts are faster after they lose their armor.

Floors 41 through 50

Floor 41: The safe way to defeat the Armos is to activate them one at a time, stun them with the ball and chain, and stab them in the back. If you're feeling daring, you can activate a bunch of them at once and take them out with bombs. Use the Double Clawshots to reach the door. **Floor 42:** Stay out side the circle of plants and use spin attacks to defeat the Boko Baba before cutting the plants down to size. **Floor 43:** Take out the archers from the ledge, but keep your shield ready—the archers can hit you as well. After you jump into the chamber, use the boomerang to stun enemies, and defeat them with spin attacks. **Floor 44:** From the ledge, fire a bomb arrow to defeat one of the enemies. When the others rush over to investigate, take them all out with another bomb arrow. **Floor 45:** Use the Hawkeye-enhanced bow to take out the archers on the towers, then use a bomb arrow to defeat one of the ReDeads and clear a safe spot. Jump down to the safe spot, and fend off the remaining ReDead with the ball and chain. Dig near the east wall to find three hearts. **Floor 46:** Blast the icy skeletons from the ledge with bomb arrows, then jump down near the east wall to avoid the Freezards' breath. Turn into wolf form to defeat the phantom rats, then smash the Freezards with the ball and chain. Equip the Magic Armor if you think you need extra defense.



Hit an icy skeleton once with a bomb arrow to destroy its spear, then again to finish it off.

Floor 47: As soon as you drop into the chamber, you'll be swarmed by enemies. Use the wolf's Dark Energy multienemy attack to defeat them quickly. **Floor 48:** Hug the wall as you drop from the ledge to avoid activating the Darknut. When the flying enemies raise their shields, use the Clawshot to pull them close and attack them with your sword. If you accidentally rouse the Darknut, keep your distance and focus on beating the flying foes before you fight the dark knight.

It's tricky to avoid activating the Darknut while dodging the flying enemies' attacks. Should you attract its attention, stay away from it—fortunately, it's slow. Stay on the move, concentrate on Z-targeting one of the flying enemies, and grab it with the Clawshot when it lowers its shield.

Floor 49: The last battle in the Cave of Ordeals consists of fighting three Darknuts at once. Use bombs to breach their defenses—stay out of the Darknuts' sword range, hold the bomb until it flashes four times, then toss it at the Darknuts; it should land behind them and damage their armor. With the armor gone, use Back Slices followed by regular attacks to finish them off.

After you toss a bomb at the Darknuts, rush forward so they'll stand their ground and take more damage. Also, if the Darknuts are clustered together so you can't focus on just one of them, use the Clawshot to make them disperse.

A Rewarding Journey

On the 50th and final floor, the Great Fairy will reward you for your arduous journey with a bottle of Fairy Tears, which will replenish all your health and give you a temporary strength boost. She'll also allow you to acquire more Fairy Tears from any Spirit Spring in the game, as long as you don't already have some in your possession.

Other Challenges Await

For game-winning strategies that cover the rest of The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess, equip yourself with the official player's guide—available now.

Wii Channels

Nintendo Is on the Air

Starting in this issue, **Nintendo Power** will devote a monthly column to the ever-growing catalog on the **Wii Channels**. This month we'll get the ball rolling with an overview of the **Virtual Console** content currently available. Look for coverage to focus on other Wii Channels as they become available.

THIS MONTH:

- New Releases
- Download Guide
- Parental Controls

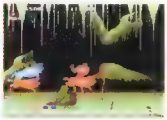
31 Games

VIRTUAL CONSOLE GAMES

The rollout has begun for what promises to be a massive selection of classic games on the Virtual Console. We've got the complete list of titles that will become available within the "launch window" (the first two months or so after launch). We'll give you a quick description of each game and a reason why you should buy it. Obviously, we won't have 31 games every month, so future installments of this column may focus more attention on individual games. (Let us know what kind of coverage you'd like to see.) In any event, we promise to keep you up-to date on what's happening each month in the Wii Shop Channel. Until next month, happy shopp ng!

Controller Options

Platform	Wii Remote	Classic Controller	GCN Controller
NES	✔	✔	✔
SNES		✔	✔
N64		✔	✔
GENESIS	SOME	✔	SOME
TURBOGRAFX 16	✔	✔	SOME



ALTERED BEAST

PLATFORM: SEGA GENESIS
PUBLISHER: SEGA
GENRE: ACTION
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1989

WHAT: A savage side-scroller in wh.ch you control a resurrected warrior with the ability to power up in size and strength. Eventually you can become one of five beasts.

WHY: You're buffed, you're undead, you can transform into giant mythical monsters—what else do you want?

BASEBALL

PLATFORM: NES
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
GENRE: SPORTS
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1985

WHAT: A simplified one- or two-player baseball game.

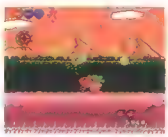
WHY: Because you are a red-blooded American (or Canadian or Japanese or Korean or Dominican or—you get the point). The pick-up-and-play controls allow for a meditative, sports-themed experience.

BOMBERMAN '93

PLATFORM: TURBOGRAFX 16
PUBLISHER: HUDSON SOFT
GENRE: ACTION
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1993

WHAT: Take your Bomberman into a maze, then blow up enemies and collect power-ups.

WHY: Two-player Bomberman can provide weeks of explosive entertainment -if you can find a like-minded competitor



BONK'S ADVENTURE

PLATFORM: TURBOGRAFX 16
PUBLISHER: NEC/HUDSON SOFT
GENRE: PLATFORMER
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1990

WHAT: A clever, prehistoric-themed platformer starring a large-headed caveman.

STAFF PICK!

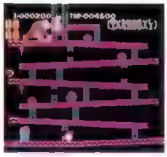
WHY: Because you're a caveman who headbutts his enemies. That sort of thing never gets old. You also get to explore the inside of a dinosaur.

COLUMNS

Platform: Sega Genesis
Publisher: Sega
Genre: Puzzle
Original Release: 1990

WHAT: Flip the positions of jewels to sort them by type as they drop down the screen in columns.

WHY: You are a puzzle fiend who enjoys trying the many variations on the falling-and-matching theme.

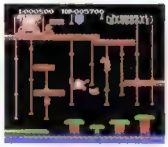


DONKEY KONG

Platform: NES
Publisher: Nintendo
Genre: Platform
Original Release: 1986

WHAT: The original platformer! Avoid barrels and flames, then rescue Pauline from the title character.

WHY: If you haven't played Donkey Kong, your gaming education is woefully incomplete. As lessons go, this early Miyamoto masterpiece is a lot of fun.

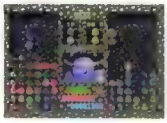


DONKEY KONG JR.

Platform: NES
Publisher: Nintendo
Genre: Action
Original Release: 1986

WHAT: The tables are turned in the Donkey Kong sequel when Mario becomes the villain and the senior Kong's son sets out to save the big ape. Much fruit collection ensues.

WHY: With a new hero, new play mechanics are introduced. Junior can climb vines two at a time, which makes the game a faster, more action-packed experience than its predecessor.

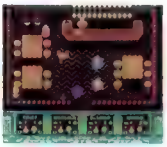


DR. ROBOTNIK'S MEAN BEAN MACHINE

Platform: Sega Genesis
Publisher: Sega
Genre: Puzzle
Original Release: 1993

WHAT: Maybe you know it better as Puyo Puyo or Kirby's Avalanche, but whatever you call it, Dr. Robotnik's Mean Bean Machine is a fast paced puzzle game.

WHY: Puzzle fans will dig the combo-crazy color-matching action, especially in versus mode.

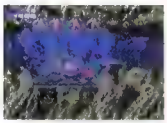


DUNGEON EXPLORER

Platform: TurboGrafx 16
Publisher: NEC/Hudson Soft
Genre: Action RPG
Original Release: 1989

WHAT: An early console action RPG that may remind you a bit of Gauntlet.

WHY: If you love top-down adventure games and classic RPG gameplay conventions, then you probably want to lock yourself in this dungeon



ECCO THE DOLPHIN

Platform: Sega Genesis
Publisher: Sega
Genre: Action
Original Release: 1992

WHAT: An underwater side-scroller about a young bottlenose dolphin named Ecco who's on a quest to find his missing friend.

WHY: Ecco revolutionized the 16-bit era with its free-roaming environments. It's also a fast-paced, unique, and highly challenging gameplay experience. To this day, there's nothing quite like it.

F-ZERO

Platform: Super NES
Publisher: Nintendo
Genre: Racing
Original Release: 1991

WHAT: A fast, futuristic racer featuring a cast of oddball characters.

STAFF PICK!

WHY: The simulated 3-D effects—brought to you by Mode 7 texture mapping—are very convincing. Despite the game's age, when the speedometer says 400 kmh, you'll feel like you're really going that fast.

GOLDEN AXE

Platform: Sega Genesis
Publisher: Sega
Genre: Action
Original Release: 1989

WHAT: A side-scrolling sword-a[illegible] Fight th[illegible] wave of supernatural enemies to reclaim the titular weapon.

WHY: You and a friend can team up against Death Adder in co-op mode. Plus, the home version contains [illegible] than the arcade version

VIRTUAL CONSOLE GAMES CONTINUED

ICE HOCKEY

PLATFORM: NES
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
GENRE: SPORTS
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1988

WHAT: 5 x teams face off in a worldwide skate-off. Five levels of puck speed and a variety of computer-controlled team configurations make taking the trophy a challenge.

WHY: You build your own team with a choice of slow but-strong skaters, speedy little guys, or all-around athletes. Let the strategizing commence

MARIO BROS.

PLATFORM: NES
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
GENRE: ACTION
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1986

WHAT: While Koopas and Fighter Flies emerge from giant pipes, Mario and his bro Luigi hop and kick their way into arcade-gaming history.

WHY: The game is loaded with famous firsts, including Luigi's first appearance and the first time the brothers are identified as plumbers.

PINBALL

PLATFORM: NES
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
GENRE: ACTION
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1985

WHAT: A simulated pinball game. You need to keep the simulated ball in play with simulated flippers

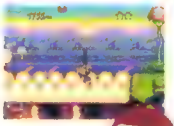
WHY: You sure play a mean pinball, and real pinball machines are expensive.

R-TYPE

PLATFORM: TURBOGRAFX 16
PUBLISHER: NEC/HUDSON SOFT
GENRE: SHOOTER
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1989

WHAT: A scrolling space-shooter based on a hugely popular arcade game.

WHY: The elaborate and—at times—massive enemies still manage to intimidate, and they look really pretty while they're doing it.

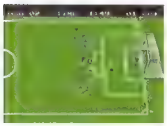


RISTAR

PLATFORM: SEGA GENESIS
PUBLISHER: SEGA
GENRE: PLATFORMER
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1995

WHAT: From the makers of Sonic the Hedgehog comes a platformer centered on a star-shaped hero who can grab enemies and shoot them with his extendable arms

WHY: Ristar may not be as big a name as Sonic, but the quality is just as high. It's a vibrantly colored technique filled blast



SOCCER

PLATFORM: NES
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
GENRE: SPORTS
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1987

WHAT: A stripped-down version of the world's sport offers seven international teams, five skill levels, and an adjustable game clock.

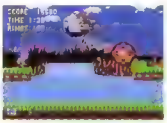
WHY: While you're waiting for Mario Strikers Charged, you can feed your kicking and passing urges with one of the original NES sports titles.

SOLOMON'S KEY

PLATFORM: NES
PUBLISHER: TECMO
GENRE: PUZZLE/ACTION
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1987

WHAT: A fast-moving puzzle game with 50 tough challenges to keep you busy for many hours.

WHY: If you're looking for something a little different from the more straightforward genre games, try this rewarding puzzler for the NES.



SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

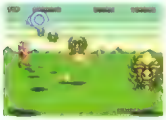
PLATFORM: SEGA GENESIS
PUBLISHER: SEGA
GENRE: PLATFORMER
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1991

WHAT: A high-speed platformer starring Sega's iconic answer to Mario

WHY: One of the all-time great platforming games, Sonic introduced a range of new gameplay mechanics to the genre. If you haven't played it, now's your chance to see what all the fuss was about.

STAFF PICK!

STAFF PICK!

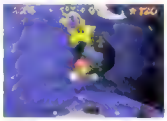


SPACE HARRIER II

PLATFORM: SEGA GENESIS
PUBLISHER: SEGA
GENRE: SHOOTER
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1989

WHAT: The sequel to the arcade (and Master System) hit lets you fly through alien landscapes to blow away an evil enemy army.

WHY: Wanna see the origins of modern gaming? Look no further than Space Harrier II. The game's faux 3-D perspective was fascinating for its time.



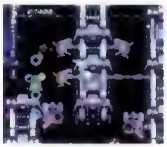
SUPER MARIO 64

PLATFORM: N64
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
GENRE: PLATFORMER
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1996

WHAT: The game that took platformers into the 3-D era. An epic nonlinear adventure heralded as one of the greatest games ever made.

WHY: See "What." Super Mario 64 is the perfect way to reacquaint yourself with the N64 era.

STAFF PICK!



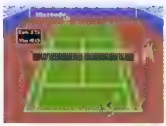
SUPER STAR SOLDIER

PLATFORM: TURBOGRAFX 16
PUBLISHER: NEC/HUDSON SOFT
GENRE: SHOOTER
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1990

WHAT: Hudson followed up the NES classic Star Soldier with one of the most intense vertically scrolling shooters of the 16-bit era.

WHY: Because you've got the firepower and the will to use it. Electricity guns, heat-seeking missiles, flamethrowers, and more are at your command.

STAFF PICK!

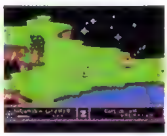


TENNIS

PLATFORM: NES
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
GENRE: SPORTS
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1985

WHAT: A basic tennis game that allows you to play against the computer in co-op mode.

WHY: You're far too sophisticated for Pong. Take your amazing Wii Sports skills back in time to devastate your 1985 AI opponents.



TOEJAM & EARL

PLATFORM: SEGA GENESIS
PUBLISHER: SEGA
GENRE: ACTION
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1991

WHAT: A co-op adventure game featuring two funky aliens who fight with tomatoes.

WHY: Because too few games bring the funk, and ToeJam & Earl definitely brings the funk; and you can fight dentists; and George Clinton doesn't have a video game yet.

STAFF PICK!

URBAN CHAMPION

PLATFORM: NES
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
GENRE: FIGHTING
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1986

WHAT: An early fighting game set in a city with terrible infrastructure problems.

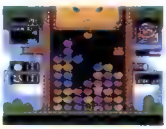
WHY: Because it isn't enough to simply beat up an opponent—you need to beat him until he falls into an open manhole.

VICTORY RUN

PLATFORM: TURBOGRAFX 16
PUBLISHER: NEC/HUDSON SOFT
GENRE: RACING
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1989

WHAT: A 3-D-ish racer that simulates the famous Paris-Dakar rally.

WHY: Many of the conventions established in Victory Run–like vehicle maintenance and resource allocation–have been employed in later rally titles. Also, it's fun to say "Dakar."



WARIO'S WOODS

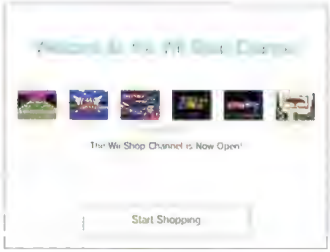
PLATFORM: NES
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
GENRE: PUZZLE
ORIGINAL RELEASE: 1994

WHAT: A Tetris-like puzzle game that replaces impersonal blocks with living creatures that you destroy with bombs.

WHY: Curiosity value: Wario's Woods pretty much turned off the lights and locked the door on game development for the NES. Plus, you play as Toad. Toad!

Wii SHOP CHANNEL BASICS

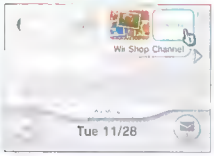
Before you can dive in and start playing Virtual Console games, you need to get online and pony up some money. We aren't allowed to loan you money (company policy), so you're out of luck there. When it comes to online access, there are so many variables—Wi-Fi vs. ethernet, brands of routers, user competence, etc.—that we'll wait a bit to see how you do before we offer specific suggestions. What we *can* tell you is how to find the game you want, buy it, then play it to your heart's content. Assuming you managed to get online in the first place, it should be a snap to navigate the menus on the Wii Shop Channel. Just follow our step-by-step guidelines below, and you should be retro-gaming in no time. For now we'll stick to the procedures for ordering games, but keep an eye on the Wii Shop Channel for Wii Ware that will enhance your online experience.



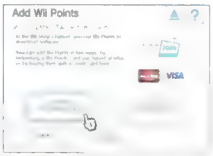
Wii Shop

The Wii Shop Channel allows you to redeem a Wii Points Card, buy points with a credit card, and purchase games and other software.

ADDING WII POINTS



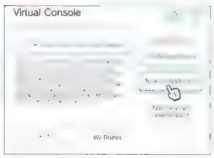
From the main **Wii Menu**, select the **Wii Shop Channel** from the top row. Click on the screen icon to connect to Nintendo's server.



Add some Wii Points to your account. Click on **Add Wii Points**, then select **Redeem Wii Points Card** or **Buy Wii Points**. Follow the instructions.

After you add the points, return to the main **Wii Shop Channel** menu. At the bottom of the screen, you should see your newly added points.

FINDING A GAME



Click on **Virtual Console**. You can then view available games by name or game system. You can also access the **Newest Additions** to the store.

Click **List Alphabetically**, scroll to the game you want, then click on it. (To go back to the **Wii Shop Channel** menu, click on the triangle icon.)

On the **Details** menu for an individual game, you can view basic info on the game, get more-detailed info, or download the game.

DOWNLOADING A GAME

On the **Details** menu, the **Download** button displays the number of Wii Points that will be deducted from your account if you buy the game.

If you have enough Wii Points to buy a game, click **Download**, then confirm the download. Wait while Mario and/or Luigi collects coins.

When the download is finished, return to the **Wii Menu**. Your new game will now occupy one of the channel screens. Click on it to play.

CONTROL ISSUES

Join the ranks of the Craftknights!

Swordcraft Story 2 features an expanded gameplay world to explore and conquer with your Guardian Beasts and Mono shift powers. Over 200 customizable weapons can be tweaked and modified to your cursed soul's content!

TEEN T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Cartoon Violence
Mild Language
Suggestive Themes
Use of Alcohol

GAME BOY ADVANCE

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Host Your Own Wii Sports Challenge

By Drew Williams & Chris Shepperd

It's gut-check time, Wii Sports fan—time to step up and take multiplayer competition to the next level. Fill your playbook with our moves, and you'll be off the social DL and ready for the big dance.

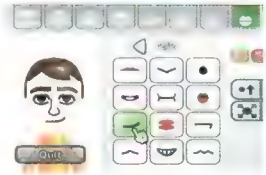
No question about it—the Wii Sports Challenge is the real deal. You can feel the electricity in your house. It's a whole new ball-game—anything can happen when your friends pick up those Wii remotes and meet on the field of battle.

From the frozen tundra of San Francisco in July to the friendly confines of any shelter during January in Toronto, people across North America are working up a sweat playing Wii sports. Now it's time to bring those people together . . . in your living room. The experts at the Wii Sports Network have devised a simple way to throw a Wii Sports tournament for your friends that will keep everyone involved in the action and, most importantly, determine a champion. Like a host nation during the Olympics, you will be responsible for maintaining fairness, providing medical treatment, policing cheaters, quelling riots, etc. Just stick to our formula for fun, and everyone will have a good time

Competition Structure

We've devised a competition that works well for eight participants. The tournament is divided into two phases. First everyone plays four of the events, where they'll earn contest points depending on how well they do. At the end of the first four events, total up everyone's scores. The top four players advance to the second phase, a single-elimination boxing championship. Have everyone participate in the same games at the same time—it will be easier to keep track of contest points after each event.

Pre-Event:



As your gladiators enter the arena, have each of them create a Mii in their image. Be sure to set the correct handedness of the Mii during setup.

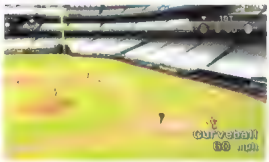
Event 1: Tennis

Get your competitors limbered up with a game of tennis.

Event 2: Bowling

Move on to a game that re-quires a little more skill, but one that players will pick up quickly.

Event 3: Baseball



Next is baseball, where your challengers will need excellent timing and a little luck.

Event 4: Golf

Finish the preliminary rounds with golf, which is sure to put the competitors to the test.

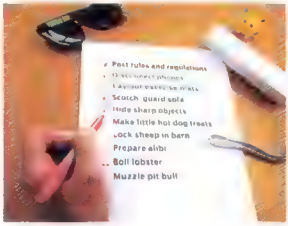
Final Event: Boxing

Boxing serves as an elimination event for the four finalists. You'll need two Wii remotes and two nunchuks for this round.

Plug in, Turn on

Throwing your own gaming tournament requires a significant amount of planning and preparation. Check out our list of useful tips for hosting your own event

• **Begin planning early.** The most important thing is to know how many people will attend the tournament so that you can set up the rules accordingly. Let your competitors know what is required of them, too: Do you want people to bring their own snacks? Do they need to contribute to the prize pool for the winners? Let them know early, and remind them often.



• **Start on time.** Eight or more players competing in five different sports can take a long time, and you don't want to lose people because it's getting late.

• **Know the rules.** Post the contest rules and schedule of events where everyone can see them—it will nip a lot of issues in the bud. When a disagreement inevitably comes up, the contestants are going to turn to you, so be ready.

• **Run the contest yourself.** Don't expect the competitors to take care of everything—it's your place and your equipment. You should take responsibility for setting up the matches, keeping track of the scores, and settling disputes.

• **Stay relaxed.** If you're having fun, everyone else will have fun, too. If there are problems, take care of them quickly and move on.

• **Keep it safe.** Allow plenty of space for the contestants to play. Make sure people are using their wrist straps, as well—make checking each other's wrist straps part of the competitors' pre-game handshake. Be sure to remind everyone to grasp the controller firmly, and that they don't need to take Albert-Belle-sized hacks and John-Daly-esque swings to achieve good results.

Event 1

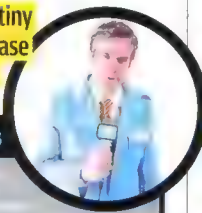
Tennis

To play professional tennis, you need freakishly perfect hand-eye coordination, an unconscious genius for geometry, and a really, really hot European "friend" supporting you in the stands. To play Wii Sports tennis, you just need decent timing. Mii's are aggressive serve-and-volley players with decent footwork (even the ones that don't have feet), so all newbies need to do is swing the remote when the ball gets to them. The best way to grow accustomed to the capabilities of the Wii remote is to hit around for a few games. If any of the tournament competitors have played real-life tennis, they should discover the nuances of different shots very quickly.

HOW TO SCORE TENNIS

Tennis is the only doubles game in the collection, but determining teams can be difficult; stick to one-on-one contests. Keep the games short—play single games only. In round-robin play, each player has to compete in seven matches; that's a total of 28 quick matches. Give each contestant one point for each win, for a total possible score of seven in the first round.

If you must wear tiny tennis shorts, please remain standing.



Pro Tips

Event 2

Bowling

Bowling alleys have long been an icon of blue collar America—suburban temples to pseudo athletics and bad karaoke. Wii Sports brings all the fun of bowling into your house without making you change into stinky rental shoes. When new players try this event for the first time, they may be inclined to think there's a trick to it; there isn't. It's just like real bowling—heck, if it helps, clear out some space so that the players can take the traditional five-step delivery. We don't recommend attaching 12-pound weights to the tip of the Wii remote, however.

HOW TO SCORE BOWLING

You don't have to be a math major to figure out bowling's scoring system, but it helps. For now, just remember: strikes good, gutters bad. Split your contestants into two groups of four, and have each group play one game. Give the winner of each group seven contest points, second place five points, third place three, and last place one.

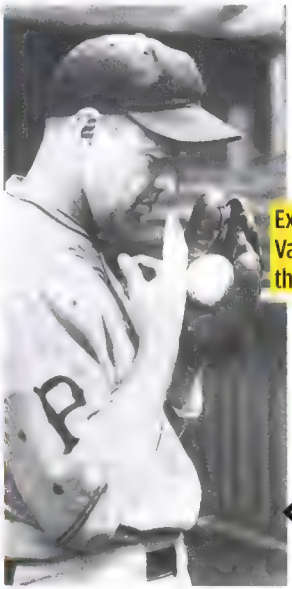
A smooth release means you won't spill your beverage.

Pro Tips

Event 3

Baseball

Football may be the most popular sport in America currently, but no game is more venerated than baseball. Born and raised in the United States, baseball has been played, watched, analyzed, and romanticized for close to 150 years. It starts with a simple premise—one player tries to throw a ball, and another player tries to hit it. In Wii Sports baseball, you take turns acting out only those roles; the rest of the game is left in the capable hands of the computer-controlled defense.



HOW TO SCORE BASEBALL

Like in tennis, players earn a point for every round-robin win. If it appears that playing this many games will take a while, split the field with half of the participants playing tennis and the other half playing baseball. Then, double the number of contest points they earn per win.

Excessive saliva and Vasoline may damage the Wii remote.

Pro Tips

Event 4

Golf

All you have to do is hit this little ball, with this little stick, into that little hole over there. Sounds like a piece of cake, doesn't it? Well, millions of golfers worldwide will quickly tell you differently. Scholars say that golf is over 500 years old, but the sport has never been as widely played as it is today. Wii Sports golf lets you unleash your inner duffer—swing to your heart's content on nine increasingly difficult holes. Draws, fades, chips, putts—Wii Sports delivers the spirit of golf straight to your living room.

HOW TO SCORE GOLF

Split your competitors into two groups and allocate points like you did with bowling (just remember that the lowest score wins!). We recommend that you have your golfers play the intermediate holes; they offer the best challenge while not being too frustrating. Of course, if your contestants already know their way around the links, feel free to crank up the difficulty.

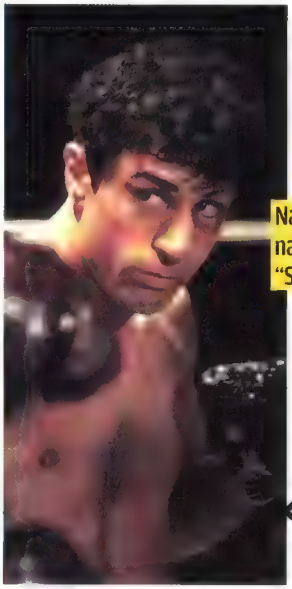
Tiger Woods proved golf isn't just for white rich guys. It's for all rich guys.

Pro Tips

Final Event:

Boxing

Called "the sweet science" by its fans, boxing deftly combines pure physical strength with captivating and subtle technique. Few sports are more primal or direct—stand toe-to-toe against your foe and try to hit him until he submits or can no longer fight back. Fortunately for your competitors, they'll be able to enjoy the artistry of boxing without having to endure the black eyes and concussions. Boxing is the only Wii Sports event that requires the nunchuk controller; remember to have each fighter put the Wii remote in his dominant hand



HOW TO SCORE BOXING

Boxing is a great game to finish your tournament on. After you've tallied up the scores and determined the top four point-getters, pair them off for two semifinal matches. The winner of each match advances to one final contest to determine the winner.

Nasty facial swelling is nature's way of saying, "Stay in school, kid."

Pro Tips

And the winner is...

Only one competitor will emerge victorious from the ring, and it should be you—you've had plenty of time to practice. If you somehow fail—despite your many lonely hours of preparation—please be a magnanimous loser. Don't avoid eye contact and whine about how you have a lot of work to do. Also, try to have some sort of prize ready—perhaps a curling trophy you picked up at the Goodwill, or a large box of Wheatries. Just try to make the experience fun—after all, because Wii Play is coming out soon, and you'll want to stage a similar event in its honor.

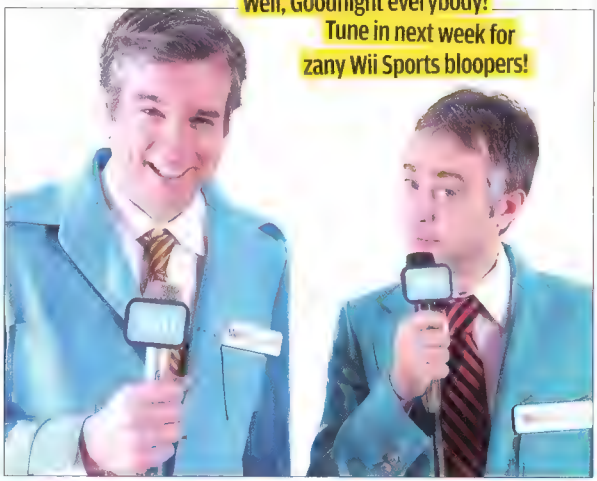
Trash Talkin'

Announcers Drew and Chris help you provide some motivation to your more Wii Sports-challenged friends.

Tennis: "My neighbors saw you through the window. An ambulance is on the way."
Bowling: "Snack bar's paging you . . . your curly fries are DONE, byotch."
Baseball: "Practicing some Tai Chi? Would you like me to stop pitching for a while?"
Golf: "Stop pretending to barely miss the hole and sink your putt, funnyman."
Boxing: "Cut him, Mick. CUT HIM!"

Tennis: "You're score is love so often, people call you Casanova."
Bowling: "Nice gutterball. Have you considered throwing it granny-style?"
Baseball: "Good thing we're not using real bats, because your swing ain't worth killing a tree for."
Golf: "With a swing like that, you should take up pinochle."
Boxing: "Sorry, they don't score boxing by counting the number of lumps on your face."

Well, Goodnight everybody! Tune in next week for zany Wii Sports bloopers!



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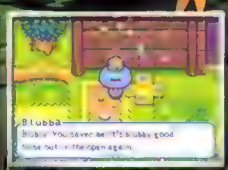

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Cartoon Violence
Comic Mischief
Use of Tobacco
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NINTENDO DS.™

SQUARE ENIX

A CLIMAX IN CRYSTAL

FINAL FANTASY III has one of the toughest endgames in RPG history. If you hope to reach the top of the Crystal Tower and survive the World of Darkness, you'll need the right party, the right gear, and more than a little luck. By Casey Loe

©1990, 2006 SQUARE ENIX CO.,LTD. All Rights Reserved. TITLE DESIGN: Yoshinako Amano.
CHARACTER DESIGN: Akihiko Yoshida. FINAL FANTASY, SQUARE ENIX and the SQUARE ENIX

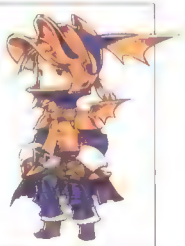
GET THE PARTY STARTED

You'll unlock the final batch of jobs at the Earth Crystal in the Ancients' Maze. This batch offers superior versions of all three mage classes as well as mighty Ninjas and Black Belts, but it doesn't completely make obsolete the jobs that have come before. There's still room for a high-level Dark Knight or Dragoon.

Dragoon

Dragoons are well-suited to the Crystal Tower's lengthy brawls. They can deal extra damage to dragons and enemies who fly, and their Jump move will protect your party from being wiped out by a single devastating spell.

LEFT HAND: Holy Lance
RIGHT HAND: Dragon Lance, Crystal Shield
HELM: Crystal Helm
ARMOR: Crystal Mail
ACCESSORY: Crystal Gloves



Dark Knight

Dark Knights are among the best front-line jobs. They're sturdy on defense and their Souleater command allows them to slaughter enemies who attack in groups of two or more (the lost HP can be easily replaced by a Devout or Sage).

LEFT HAND: Ragnarok
RIGHT HAND: Masamune, Crystal Shield
HELM: Crystal Helm
ARMOR: Crystal Mail
ACCESSORY: Crystal Gloves

Devout

Devouts are expert healers, but don't forget that they can contribute to a strong offense with spells like Haste and Reflect, and that their Teleport spell allows you to escape combat at will. Save MP by using the Elder Staff for healing whenever you can.

LEFT HAND: Elder Staff
RIGHT HAND: Rune Staff
HELM: Ribbon, Feathered Hat
ARMOR: White Robe
ACCESSORY: Protect Ring

Black Belt

The Black Belt is an enhanced Monk who uses the same equipment but enjoys higher stats and different abilities. The Boost command allows a Black Belt to charge up for a turn, and then deal extra damage (more than twice the usual amount) on the next turn. It's a great way to hit bosses for 9,999 points of hurt, but don't Boost yourself twice in a row or your Black Belt will overload and take a bunch of damage itself!

LEFT HAND: Hellish Claws
RIGHT HAND: Dark Claws
HELM: Ribbon, Chakra Band
ARMOR: Fuma Garb
ACCESSORY: Protect Ring

Magus

The shop at the end of Eureka offers powerful spells like Flare and Meteor for Magi. But you'll find few enemies with elemental weaknesses in the Crystal Tower, so outside of the level 8 spells, a Magus won't be very useful. A Summoner is a better choice.

HANDS: Omnirod, Wizard Rod
HELM: Ribbon, Feathered Hat
ARMOR: Black Robe
ACCESSORY: Protect Ring, Diamond Bracers

Summoner

The Summoner can use the Evoker's spells with more power and consistency, dealing heavy damage that cannot be Reflected. Bahamut and Leviathan are the most powerful spells, but Odin's Catastro spell has the potential to end difficult nonboss fights in a single casting.

HANDS: Omnirod, Wizard Rod
HELM: Ribbon, Feathered Hat
ARMOR: Black Robe
ACCESSORY: Protect Ring

Ninja

Ninjas are frail but quick and versatile, and are capable of both front-line katana combat and back-row sniping with boomerangs. They offer one of the deadliest and most reliable anti-boss attacks with their Throw command, but you'll need to spend a small fortune buying Shuriken in Eureka to put the attack to good use.

LEFT HAND: Masamune, Moonring Blade
RIGHT HAND: Kiku-Ichimonji, Rising Sun, Genji Shield
HELM: Genji Helm
ARMOR: Genji Armor
ACCESSORY: Genji Gloves

Sage

The Sage can cast any spell in the game, including Summon spells. That sounds great, but you'll probably find yourself saving your limited MP to use healing and enhancement spells exclusively, and wondering why you didn't just use a Devout.

HANDS: Elder Staff, Wizard Rod
HELM: Ribbon, Feathered Hat
ARMOR: Black Robe, White Robe
ACCESSORY: Protect Ring

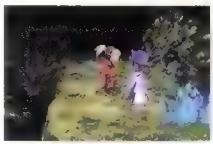
Before Entering the Crystal Tower

Back to the Grind

A death in the Crystal Tower could cost you hours of playtime, so if you're having trouble on the lower floors, back out and do some grinding to go up a few levels. The foes in Bahamut's Cave offer plenty of EXP, or you can pick a fight with a Bluck in the Crystal Tower's first floor and repeatedly slay the Kum Kum it summons.

Gear Up in Eureka

The center door on the first floor of the Crystal Tower leads to Eureka, the Forbidden Land. Here you can battle bosses to earn the game's best weapons and collect plenty of Shuriken, Phoenix Downs, and Elixirs on the way. The dungeon ends with shopkeepers who sell the game's best spells in all three magic types, and a hidden shopkeeper through a passage to the right that sells Shuriken! You can also heal yourself in the nearby pools.



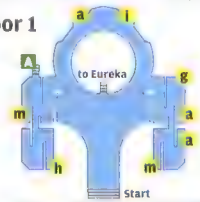
THE FINAL DUNGEONS

After you've completed Eureka, heal up at the pools behind the shopkeepers and teleport out to the world map. Save your game and prepare for the grueling finale: two consecutive dungeons with six bosses in all. You won't have another opportunity to save until after the credits roll!

The Crystal Tower

Most of the items in the Crystal Tower aren't worth the trouble, so you may wish to ignore them and hurry on to the stairs. This is the longest stretch of the finale, so don't be afraid to break out the Elixirs.

Floor 1

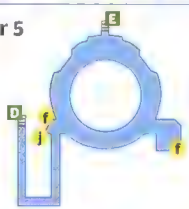


Floor 2

Floor 3

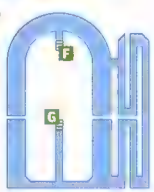
Floor 4

Floor 5

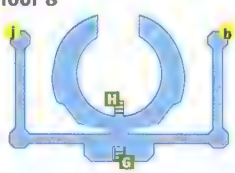


Floor 6

Floor 7

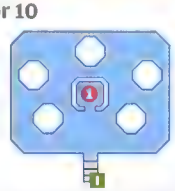


Floor 8



Floor 9

Floor 10



Dungeon Tips

Here There Be Dragons

Be careful when treasure-hunting in the final floors of the Crystal Tower, as you may end up in random encounters with Red, Yellow, or Green Dragons. These foes have 99,999 HP, and are arguably more powerful than the Crystal Tower boss. If you stick it out you'll win 15,000 EXP per character and possibly an Elixir or rare Onion equipment, but you'll have to expend valuable resources to do it—consider using a Teleport spell to escape instead.

The Point of No Return

If you want to flee with your EXP intact, you can teleport out of the Crystal Tower at any time before you approach Xande. If you do defeat him, you'll automatically be taken to the World of Darkness, from which there are only two possible escapes: death and victory.

Tie On a Ribbon

Each of the four wings in the World of Darkness has a single chest that holds a Ribbon. You'll want one Ribbon for every member of your party, so track down as many as you need. Beware: each chest is guarded by a clone of Xande that uses the same attacks but has less HP

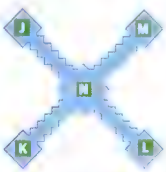
Map Key

- a Chocobo Wrath
- b Crystal Armor
- c Crystal Gloves
- d Crystal Helm
- e Crystal Shield
- f Elixir
- g Elven Bow
- h Fuma Garb
- i Lilith Kiss
- j Phoenix Down
- k Ribbon
- l Shuriken
- m White Musk
- A Door
- 1 Boss

World of Darkness

The World of Darkness is composed of four wings, each of which ends in a boss. You must defeat all four bosses before you can use the warp in the center to reach Floor 6 and follow the dim lines through the darkness to arrive at the final boss.

Floor 1



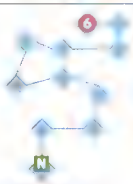
Floor 2

Floor 3

Floor 4

Floor 5

Floor 6



THE BOSSES

After you defeat any boss, all of your characters will be restored to full HP and MP. So you can afford to go for broke with your most powerful spells, even on the random encounters between the bosses

1 Xande

HP: 30,000 **GIL:** 27,000 **EXP:**

Begin this battle by hitting Xande with Reflect so its Protect and Haste spells will boost your guys instead. (Although this will bounce your own black and white magic back at you, it won't bounce Summon spells.) After you slay Xande you'll face the Cloud of Darkness in a scripted battle; don't waste any items during this unwinnable fight.

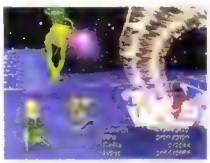
2 Cerberus

HP: 99,999 **GIL:** 66,600 **EXP:** 16,666

Cerberus gets three moves each turn, and will usually spend them on physical attacks. Put your Ninja in the back row to minimize its exposure, and have it focus on throwing Shuriken and unneeded weapons. Have your Devout or Sage cast Protect on your remaining frontline fighter, then switch to full-time healing duty.

3 Echidna

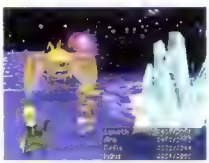
HP: 99,999 **GIL:** 66,600 **EXP:** 16,6



Echidna focuses primarily on magic spells like Quake, Tornado, and Drain. Reflect isn't effective against many of them and it prevents you from delivering timely healing, so focus on rapid healing and enhancement spells like Haste. Make liberal use of Bahamut and Shuriken (if you can afford them) to get through the battle quickly.

4 Ahriman

HP: 99,999 **GIL:** 66,600 **EXP:** 16,6



Ahriman will cast Curaja on itself sometimes, so tag it with a Reflect spell on turn one. Ahriman can petrify with its attacks, so make sure your healer is wearing a Ribbon. This may be the easiest of the four guardians, but don't get cocky and let your HP levels drop—Ahriman might just cast Meteor to cause devastating damage

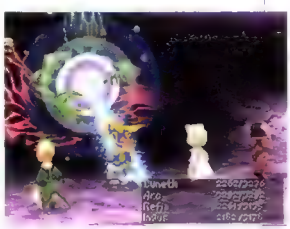
5 Two-headed Dragon

HP: 99,999 **GIL:** 66,600 **EXP:** 16,666

Don't challenge the Two-Headed Dragon until you have Ribbons for all of your spellcasters, because the dragon's physical attacks inflict the Silence condition on their targets. The dragon hits hard but it can't use magic, so casting Protect on your frontline fighters is the best use of your Devouts' and Sages' early turns.

6 Cloud of Darkness

HP: 120,000 **GIL:** 70,000 **EXP:**



Before challenging the final boss, put your Ninjas in the back row and make sure everyone is wearing a Ribbon to negate the Bad Breath attack. At the start of the fight, cast Reflect on the Cloud of Darkness to negate the Haste and Protect spells that its tentacles can cast. That will render the tentacles nearly useless, allowing you to focus on the cloud alone. Throw Shuriken every turn, and use plenty of Elixirs so your Devout can cast Curaja and Arise when needed, and your Summoner can call Bahamut or Leviathan constantly.

RETURN TO THE THRONE

The grand finale of Ubisoft's time-twisting Prince of Persia trilogy comes to Wii.

By Steve Thomason

When it was released last year for the previous generation of consoles, Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones didn't get nearly the attention it deserved. The stirring conclusion to the Sands of Time saga marked a return to grace for the series after the disappointing Warrior Within, and delivered a platforming masterpiece worthy of its royal heritage. So it's only fitting that the prince's crowning achievement get a second chance when Ubisoft brings The Two Thrones to Wii this March. Though the content of the adventure is identical to its GameCube counterpart, a new Wii-specific control scheme will attempt to make your journey through Babylon more tactile. Here's an exclusive first look at how it will work.

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Dagger Plant

The platforming in Prince of Persia requires the utmost precision, so most of the acrobatics remain assigned to the buttons—press A to jump, B to run along a wall, etc. To plant your dagger into certain environmental objects, however, you have to flick the Wii remote. It's a little awkward at first, but once you get the timing down it adds a certain tangible element that augments the sensation of being a total badass.

Speed Kill

One of the highlights of The Two Thrones is the introduction of the "speed kill." If you get close enough to an enemy without being spotted, you can cut him down quickly with a series of well-timed strikes. To initiate a kill in the Wii version, you simply swing the nunchuk. The camera will then switch to a cinematic view, and as the prince goes through the devilishly extravagant motions of dispatching his foe, you must flick the remote in time with the on-screen cues. The enemies are typically positioned so that speed kills flow naturally from the platforming segments. If you're careful, there's rarely any need to stop for combat; just run along the wall, jump onto a balcony, decapitate the guy before he even sees you, and be on your way.

Free-Form Fighting

When you do find yourself in the thick of battle, the nunchuk represents the prince's left hand, and the remote represents his right. The Dagger of Time always occupies his right hand, so swinging the remote performs an attack with that legendary blade. Swinging the nunchuk slashes with whichever secondary weapon the prince is carrying, or grabs the enemy if his left hand is empty. While playing as the Dark Prince, the nunchuk controls the chain-like Daggertail. How you swing the controllers has no effect on the type of attack, but with the right timing you can chain together a variety of deadly combos.

The Daggertail

You can also use the Daggertail for platforming. Simply flick the nunchuk to swing from poles or to latch onto blocks and various mechanisms. Once you've got ahold of certain objects, you can drag them toward you by slowly pulling up on the nunchuk. Like the dagger plant, manipulating the Daggertail via the nunchuk feels a bit tricky initially, but it has the potential to make an already great game even more absorbing.

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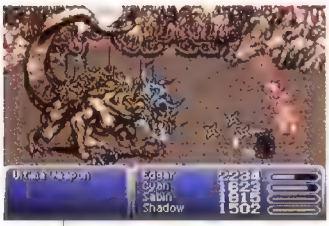
FINAL FANTASY VI ADVANCE

The Finest Fantasy



One of the greatest role-playing games of all time is on the way to GBA. Learn why FINAL FANTASY VI Advance sets the standard.

By Chris Hoffman

Role-playing-game fans could argue forever about which game in the FINAL FANTASY series is best. The FINAL FANTASY name is synonymous with quality; almost every entry in the franchise offers trend-setting innovation. The first game defined a genre; the third introduced the character-customizing job system; the fourth placed a heavier emphasis on emotional storytelling; and the seventh introduced RPGs to a whole new generation of fans. But as to which game takes top honors? According to the NP Top 200 in our 200th issue, it's none other than FINAL FANTASY VI (which was originally released in North America for Super NES under the guise of FINAL FANTASY III—not to be confused with the recent DS release). It wasn't just one thing that FINAL FANTASY VI got right—it was everything. An astounding story, incredible characters, and some of the most detailed graphics and sound of the 16-bit era built upon the framework created by the game's predecessors to create a monumental achievement in RPGs that still stands to this day. When FINAL FANTASY VI Advance hits the GBA in February 2007, players will get one more chance to experience the game's unparalleled magic.

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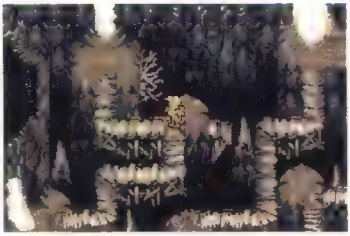
A Fantastic Foundation

FINAL FANTASY VI elevates the essentials of the FINAL FANTASY series to new heights. As always, an epic quest is at the core of the game—a vast exploration-filled journey that takes players through cities and castles, across deserts and forests, down river rapids, and into engaging dungeons. FINAL FANTASY VI was the first in the series to add a true cinematic aspect to the fantasy setting (a theme later revisited in games such as FINAL FANTASY VII and VIII), and the melding of magic and technology, plus [illegible]

Randomly paced random battles round out the other half of FINAL FANTASY's impeccable RPG equation. The Active Time Battle system introduced in FINAL FANTASY IV is again the basis of combat, so instead of simply taking turns engaging the game's fantastic and horrifying beasts—trading blows back and forth as set-order gauges next to each combatant's HP fills up as the fight progresses. When the gauge is full, you get the chance to take action (by selecting an attack, special, or other command). The result is a fast-paced, action-driven combat that keeps you on your toes and proves that speed is just as important as strength.

As the last game in the series on the Super NES, FINAL FANTASY VI also benefited from years of experience in the development of Squaresoft. The game took full advantage of the hardware with extra-detailed, colorful hand-drawn backgrounds and sprites, and the character sprites were overflowing with personality. As always, Yoshitaka Amano created the stunning artwork for the main characters as well as the supporting cast, and Nobuo Uematsu's musical score was breathtaking. Not only was the music so good that many fans still regard it as the pinnacle of the series' audio, but it was released as a three-CD set in the US—an extreme rarity at the time. Additionally, the game pushed the technological envelope with a Mode 7 overworld map. Although hardly cutting-edge by today's standards, the ability to view the entire world from a 3-D perspective while on an airship or while riding a Chocobo was [illegible]



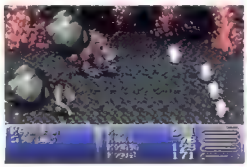
Building off of the groundwork set by previous games in the series, FINAL FANTASY VI Advance utilizes the Active Time Battle system to keep its combat excitingly paced. Unlike in typical turn-based combat, a meter determines when you can execute your next move, and enemies won't wait before taking their shots

Fantasy Stars

As series fans are aware, the FINAL FANTASY games traditionally feature separate worlds, characters, and stories, but they share common aspects that are reinvented with each title. Most prominent among these elements: moogles, chocobos, and a character by the name of Cid. Here's how these fundamentals fare in FINAL FANTASY VI.

Chocobos, as always, are a great means of transportation. They also show up in battle and other places

Cid's the lead scientist for the empire, but he's not evil. He's one of the first imperials to realize the folly of war



The adorable moogles are eager to lend a helping hand. One of them, Mog, may eventually join your party permanently

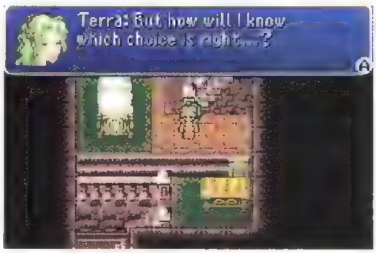
Personalities to Spare

What really sets FINAL FANTASY VI apart from other games in the series, however, is its diverse cast of characters. While some of the preceding games focused on a core group of heroes and emphasized a job system or other customization options to provide specialization, the sixth game features a cast of more than a dozen playable characters, each one boasting a special skill that makes him completely different from his companions.

Terra, for example, is an innate magic user who gains the ability to unleash latent powers partway through the game; Locke's a thief who can steal from enemies; Edgar, the mechanically inclined king of Figaro, attacks with tools like an auto-crossbow and a chain saw; martial artist Sabin uses special attacks that are activated by entering fighting game style button commands; Celes can absorb enemies' magic attacks with her blade; Setzer has a slot machine that rewards him with a variety of offense; the ninja, Shadow, boasts a throwing technique; swordsman Cyan uses a meter to unleash bushido attacks, Gau expands his repertoire by hanging out with enemy beasts; Mog dances his way to victory; Strago's a blue mage who can learn enemy attacks; and precocious Relm can paint images of her foes that come to life in battle. And that's just for starters—the game also features hidden characters and bit players whom you control for only brief durations. Throughout most of the game, you can choose which four characters to include in your main party, allowing you to create a team that best suits your playing style.

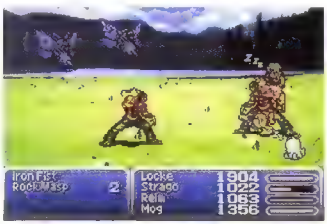
Of course, each character also has access to the essentials of combat—physical attacks, magic, and items. By collecting and equipping magicite found throughout the game, you can customize your team with a vast array of magic spells as they earn AP in battle; you can make one character specialize in healing spells and another focus on attack magic, or you can go all out and teach every character every spell. Magicite offers two additional benefits: it bestows characters with permanent stat boosts as they level up, and you can use it in battle to summon offensive or defensive aid from all manner of creatures, including series stalwarts like Ifrit, Shiva, and Ramuh.

Sabin's fighting-game-style blitz techniques are among the most powerful moves in the game.



Terra possesses powers unlike those of any human. But more than strength, she wants something worth fighting for.

Gambler Setzer attacks with a slot machine and loaded dice, and can even throw cash at his foes. You may recognize him from his recent guest appearance in Kingdom Hearts II.



Relm hasn't even reached her teens, but she's got amazing powers. When she draws enemies' pictures in battle, they come to life and do her bidding.

Cyan is a noble warrior who has long served the kingdom of Doma. Even his sword skills can't protect him from the ghosts of his past, however.

Two Worlds, One Epic

The thread that ties the amazing gameplay and memorable characters together is an epic, sweeping story. You won't encounter the usual elemental crystals here; instead, you'll find a more-mature plot based around a world at war, in which the Gestahlian Empire is using the fusion of magic and technology to conquer neighboring nations and establish itself as the globe's dominant power. Although Terra—whose magical abilities have resulted in the empire turning her into a mind-controlled weapon—initially seems to be the game's lead character, the story quickly evolves into a tale in which all the characters share the spotlight. At one point a few hours in to the game, the story splits into three branches, each focused on a different set of characters, and you get to play through the events in whatever order you choose before they tie together at a crucial juncture.

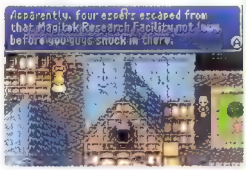
The developments that follow—as the Returner alliance struggles to stop the tyrannical empire from harnessing the power of magical creatures called espers—are equally compelling, covering the full emotional spectrum and tackling topics such as love, death, and plenty of betrayal. As anyone who's played through the famous opera-house scene can attest, FINAL FANTASY VI achieves a level of sophisticated storytelling that few RPGs before or after have been able to reach.

Halfway through the adventure, the story takes an even more dramatic turn. Thanks to the machinations of the game's diabolical villain, the imperial mage Kefka, world-shattering events unfold that affect everything your party has been fighting for. When the story picks up again in the foreboding World of Ruin, a full year has passed and everything has changed: violent beasts run amok, once-lush vegetation withers under the harsh sun, and unnatural phenomena reshape the landscape while the population cowers in fear. As you explore the dangerous new world and reassemble your scattered team of heroes, you'll gain the opportunity to strike back against the forces that have driven the world into madness. Unlike some games in the FINAL FANTASY series (particularly VIII and IX), the game's story never loses focus despite its twists and turns, and by the time you've completed your quest, you'll have experienced one of the most captivating tales of any RPG. If you missed out on the game's previous incarnations, don't pass up the chance to experience the majesty of FINAL FANTASY VI Advance.

The Best Gets Better

You'll find plenty of new content in the Advance edition of FINAL FANTASY VI. One of the most significant enhancements is the inclusion of four new espers who will grant you their powers once you find them. You can also tackle the extremely challenging Dragons' Den dungeon near the game's end; if you beat it, you'll unlock a new endurance-battle mode. Similar to previous GBA FINAL FANTASY releases, VI includes a bestiary, as well as a music player and newly added character portraits. And even though the SNES original boasted a solid translation, the script has been reworked, too; fans will notice new names for some spells, enemies, and items, plus enhanced dialogue and—don't freak out, hard-core gamers—new lyrics in the opera scene.

How else do you expect to keep track of all 384 types of enemies in the game?



New espers will grant you access to some of the most powerful spells and summons.

PLANET NINTENDO

One year after its introduction, Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection is gaining momentum with 18 games and more than two million players.

By George Sinfield

Global gaming got a big boost last year when Nintendo introduced Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection, allowing players the world over to zoom past each other on the courses of Mario Kart DS and exchange skateboard designs in Tony Hawk's American Sk8land. Since then, the list of Wi-Fi-enabled games has grown to 18, with many more to come in 2007. Here's the lowdown on what you can experience with the current lineup. For details on making a connection, go to www.nintendowifi.com.

The American Sk8land art-sharing feature proved to be so popular the developers added new customization for Downhill Jam. In addition to graffiti tags and decks, community members can upload their own torso and pant designs.

Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam

Tony Hawk's American Sk8land has scored big with the Wi-Fi community. Now Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam goes the extra mile with up to four players at a time, a dozen game modes, new art sharing options, and chat functionality during matches. Modes include elimination races (which knock out the person in last place at checkpoints), grind distance competitions, and the ever-popular Combo Mambo contest (which rewards the player who can score the biggest combo). Team Challenges let two players collaborate on a variety of goals. The chat feature lets you transmit a 10-second voice sample to other players during a match between friends. For full details on all of the game's Wi-Fi features, check out the Downhill Jam community at http://ds.downhill-jam.com.

Star Fox Command

Star Fox Command's single-player game has a lot of big-picture strategizing, but its Wi-Fi modes are pure action. Up to four players compete in a dogfight over a randomly selected game environment. The goal is to shoot down as many opponents as possible within the time limit and collect the gold stars they leave behind. The pilot who collects the most stars is declared the winner. Floating power-ups give you twin laser, stealth capabilities, and bombs, as well as other upgrades. The Battle Royale option tosses you into the deep end; it finds a full field of opponents of any skill level. In Free Battle mode you can arrange a match against players with whom you've exchanged friend codes, or join a Random Battle against your choice of one, two, or three opponents. Random Battle opponents are selected from a field of players who have a similar player rank.

If you drop a bomb on an opponent, make sure that a rival isn't close enough to collect your target's star before you can get to it.

Clubhouse Games

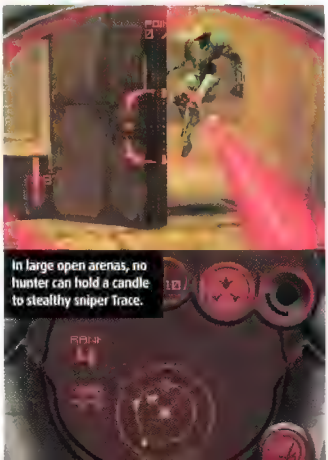
Clubhouse games offers 14 Wi-Fi-enabled card games, along with 21 board and action games. Among the card games that attract the most Wi-Fi traffic are blackjack and Texas Hold 'Em. Other popular pastimes include chess, checkers, and darts. Some of the games, such as chess and checkers, are naturally built for two players, but others allow for as many as eight participants. You can play against friends or search the world for opponents. While going against the worldwide field, you'll earn points for every victory and rise in the in-game rankings. The activities are fun as a single-player undertaking, but competition makes your victories much sweeter.

Players talk amongst themselves by exchanging chat messages.

Metroid Prime Hunters

Ever since its debut in March, Metroid Prime Hunters has been a favorite among the Wi-Fi faithful. It allows for matches in your choice of 26 arenas: some large and suitable for a group of four opponents, some compact and appropriate for head-to-head battles. Players can choose to control any unlocked hunter. The Find Game option puts you into a four-player battle against randomly selected opponents. You have the choice to curb adversaries from anywhere in the world or from your region. Additionally, you can search for foes of any rank or those of a rank that matches your own. After the battle, you can register your opponents as rivals. Friends and Rival matches offer the same options as those of local multiplayer battles.

The Stasis Bunker arena becomes unlocked after you've played 40 local multiplayer games or a Wi-Fi match.



In large open arenas, no hunter can hold a candle to stealthy sniper Trace.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

The List Goes On

There are as many approaches to Wi-Fi play as there are Wi-Fi-enabled games. Listed below are the rest of the currently available titles and their Wi-Fi features.

Animal Crossing: Wild World
Visit friends' villages, talk to the inhabitants, and collect items.

Castlevania: Portrait of Ruin
Sell items to fellow vampire slayers.

Contact
Register friends to exchange data and make them appear as nonplayer characters on WiFisland.

Digimon World DS
Battle and trade Digimon with other trainers. Match two Digimon to make a Digi-Egg.

FINAL FANATASY III
Exchange mail with other players and unlock side quests.

Konductra
Test your skills against those of other players.

LostMagic
Go head-to-head against other magic-users.

Mario vs. DK 2: March of the Minis
Share your custom levels with your friends.

Open Season
Scramble for fish crackers in a two-player minigame.

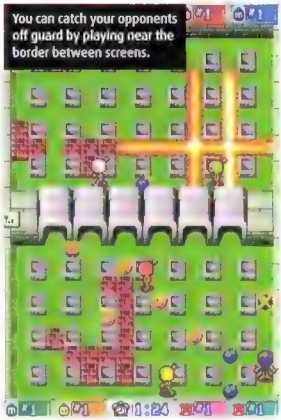
Tenchu: Dark Secret
Exchange items with other players.

Tetris DS
Challenge puzzle fans to a Wi-Fi match.

Tony Hawk's American Sk8land
Challenge another player to a skating session, download custom goals, and upload high scores and skateboard designs. Check into the community at www.american-sk8land.com.

Bomberman Land Touch!

The Bomberman games have always been great for multiple players. The level of excitement rises exponentially the more participants there are. The Bomberman Battle Pack mode of Bomberman Land Touch! offers classic Bomberman play with as many as eight characters, spread over both screens. That's a lot of bombs and power-ups to keep track of! Wi-Fi matches allow for as many as four players; the other four participants are filled in by computer-controlled bombers. You can set up a match between players that you've exchanged friend codes with, rivals (players who match your skill level), anyone in the country, or anyone in the world. The stage is selected by a vote among participants. If you're curious about the skill levels of your opponents, you can press the X Button to reveal their names and icons that show their skill levels.



Mario Kart DS

Mario Kart DS, one of the games that launched Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection, is still among the service's most popular titles. You'll likely be able to find opponents any time of the day—whenever the urge to speed around the Mushroom Kingdom hits you. Every Wi-Fi competition is four races long. Before each race, the field of up to four speedsters votes to choose a course from 20 available. Ties are broken by random selection from the tracks that received votes. Since skill level varies widely among Mario Kart DS players, the game lets you play against those who know the game about as well as you do in Rivals mode. You can also set up a game with your friends or search the region or the globe for opponents.

Any character and kart that you've unlocked in the single-player game is available to use in Wi-Fi battles. If you want to impress the crowd, roll up to the starting line with R.O.B. or Waluigi.

Because Jess plays video games the ESRB
(that's the Entertainment Software Rating Board) understands that some games aren't right for everyone.
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Into the Blue

Go overboard with Lost in Blue 2 for DS, the exotic sequel to Konami's compelling tropical survival thriller.

By Chris Shepperd

In 2005 Konami released Lost in Blue, a subtly challenging and addictive adventure game for the DS. Despite some shortcomings, Lost in Blue received critical praise for its originality and extensive, creative use of the DS's special features. Now Konami revisits the survival genre, eager to show that it has learned a great deal in the past year: with more adventure, more things to do, and more harrowing thrills, Lost in Blue 2 will take you to a whole other world.

The health and nourishment information will be familiar to those who have played Lost in Blue.

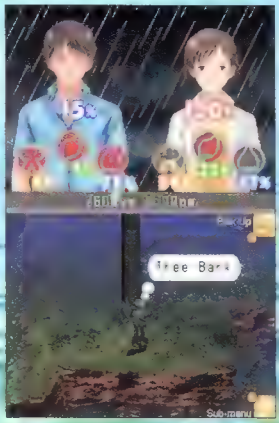
The island is enormous and intricate. You'll need to keep one eye on your map to prevent yourself from getting lost in the wilderness.

"Lost in Blue" is a trademark of Konami Corporation ©2007 KONAMI

WASHED ASHORE

Veterans of Lost in Blue will be familiar with the story of Lost in Blue 2. You begin your adventure on a cruise ship sailing the high seas, but very quickly something goes terribly wrong. Your room begins to flood and you realize in a moment that the boat is about to sink. The next thing you know, you wake up on the beach of an apparently deserted island—cold, hungry, and alone. A quick survey of your surroundings shows that you're not the only one who survived the shipwreck that dumped you here—another castaway roughly your age has been washed ashore. You're glad to see that you won't have to endure the challenge to stay alive by yourself. Together, you and your new friend must find shelter and sustenance while searching for a way off the island. Actually, with the abundance of fish, game, and wild vegetables available just outside the cave entrance, you could live a rather comfortable life right where you are, but that wouldn't make for a very interesting game. As you explore deeper into the island, you'll find all kinds of new varieties of animals and food, as well as additional materials for fashioning more-intricate tools and furniture. You can guarantee that you won't be rescued if you stay in one place—you might even find other inhabitants, although there's no guarantee they'll be friendly if they exist.

Unlike many adventure games, you are not propelled by a story of the developers' choosing; your actions tell your story. Will you take a dip in the ocean, only to get eaten by a reef shark? Will you get caught in a killer storm and be separated from your partner forever? Or will you discover a way off the island and gain worldwide fame by telling the tale of your harrowing adventure? How you live your new life is completely up to you.



TOUCH THE WORLD

Lost in Blue 2's controls are essentially the same as the original game's—you use the touch screen for virtually everything. You maneuver your character through the 3-D world by holding the stylus on the screen in the direction you want to go. You can also click on an item that's lying on the ground to pick it up, and interact with objects and your partner by tapping onscreen icons. (You can use the control pad to walk around, as well, but most of the time it's easier to use the touch screen. There are also plenty of tasks that use the touch screen, such as cooking and foraging for food.)

One major change from Lost in Blue is that you can choose to play either as the boy or the girl from the outset of the game. Previously you had to achieve one of the several possible endings playing as the boy before you could tackle the adventure as the girl. The balance between the roles of the characters has been adjusted quite a bit since the first game, as well. Before, the daily tasks for the boy and girl were very separated: The boy was

responsible for foraging and hunting for food, exploring the island, and collecting essentials such as firewood. While the girl took care of chores such as cooking, keeping the cave fire stoked, and crafty stuff like fashioning rope and baskets. Thankfully, in the sequel you have much more control over the division of labor. For example, if you're controlling the boy, you can head to the stream to fish for the day's breakfast and send the girl out to collect firewood. All of the decision-making is done via menus—you just talk to your fellow survivor and tell him or her what to do. Being able to assign tasks to the other person makes it much easier for you to explore the depths of the island with less risk of running out of vital supplies. You can't always expect your companion to be as efficient as you would be, however—you may be able to pick up three or four bunches of twigs for firewood in the space of a couple of in-game hours, your partner may retrieve only one handful. Each character has strengths—the boy learned to cook while in a mountaineering club, whereas the girl was part of an archery squad in high school. You'll learn more about their unique talents as you get the further into the game.

All of this automation and delegation makes daily life a lot easier, but there are also plenty of new challenges for you to face in the wilderness. Your first few days on the island are particularly rough—your stomach is almost empty and your energy is completely drained. It will take several days to get your health back. Once you do have the strength to begin exploring, you'll notice the sheer immensity of the island -winding paths and intricate geography make expeditions very difficult. Tools and supplies are rare, as well—in the first Lost in Blue, bottles that washed ashore very early in the game allowed you to transport water easily, and firewood was abundant: you could afford to disappear into the jungle for a full day and know that both you and your partner wouldn't freeze to death at night. Now you'll have to be more prudent in your adventures, limiting yourself to briefer daytrips until your stamina improves and you can gradually find new equipment.

Other new dangers lurk on the island, too. Wild animals—tigers, wolves, and alligators, to name a few—roam all over the place. You can often avoid conflict by keeping your distance from the beasts, but not always; when there's no escape, you'll have to fight for your life. When you encounter an enemy, the action cuts to a minigame in which you must dodge attacks by tapping one side of the touch screen, then counterstrike by poking the creature with the stylus. To compound the situation, natural disasters such as earthquakes and hurricanes will strike the island, making life extra tough.

BEYOND THE SEA

Konami promises that there's even more to Lost in Blue 2 than its extensive adventure mode. Via DS download play, you'll be able to participate in minigame competitions with friends, including a fishing event. There are also hints that extra modes unlock once your journey has concluded. In the preview version we played, these features weren't yet implemented; we'll have more information as the game gets closer to its launch.

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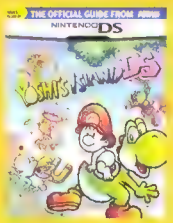
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS



YOSHI'S ISLAND DS

POKÉMON RANGER

FINAL FANTASY V ADVANCE

NEW SUPER MARIO BROS.

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- THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS ADVENTURES
- METROID PRIME 2 ECHOES
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- METROID PRIME HUNTERS
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FIRE IN THE SKY

Seek and Destroy

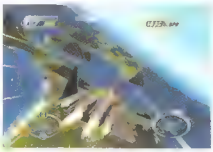
"We want to pack in as many explosions as we can per minute." That's how Codemasters senior producer Andrew Wensley summarizes Heatseeker, the title he and Australian developer IR Gurus Interactive (the studio behind the acclaimed Heroes of the Pacific) hope will be the greatest air-combat game since Afterburner. And judging by an early playtest, the team has a real shot at achieving that lofty goal. Like Sega's seminal arcade classic, Heatseeker is all about high-speed, unadulterated action. Though the game features an impressive line up of real licensed aircraft (more on that in a bit), it is in no way, shape, or form a flight sim. "Some missions have you racking up triple-digit kills," enthuses Wensley. "The whole aim is to take air combat and make it into an action movie—something that you would expect Hollywood to take inspiration from."

In real modern-day sorties, pilots will typically lock onto enemies from distances of 10 kilometers or more. But that kind of long-range combat doesn't make for very exciting gameplay. As Wensley explains, "We really wanted to avoid the whole idea of 'blip-killing.' So in Heatseeker, the standard missiles engage at ranges that force you to get up close and dogfight." That means you're always in the thick of things, constantly trying to outmaneuver opposing aircraft. Most missions also have you dealing with myriad ground and naval units, creating a very active battle theater. It actually feels a bit like the Rogue Squadron series (only with F-22 Raptors instead of TIE Fighters and battleships instead of AT-ATs).

The payoff for these skirmishes comes in the form of a special "Impact Cam." When you shoot down one of your adversaries, the camera will occasionally cut away to a cinematic view of the explosion. The resulting shower of smoke trails and flaming debris may be a bit exaggerated, but it's immensely satisfying. "We're just trying to throw as many particles out there as we can, so the plane explodes and explodes again and explodes again," laughs Wensley. According to the producer, there are about 20 variations on the Impact Cam, with all sorts of different angles, zooms and bullet-time-esque effects. "It's especially cool when the pieces come flying towards the camera," he muses. If ever a game celebrated the art of blowing stuff up, this is it.

"The whole aim is to take air combat and make it into an action movie—something that you would expect Hollywood to take inspiration from."

—Andrew Wensley, Senior Producer

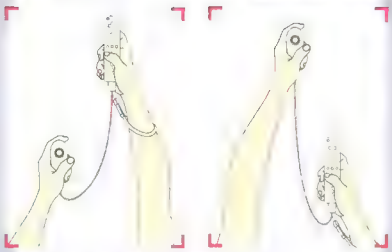


Taking Flight

Though Heatseeker will also be available on competing platforms, the team is particularly excited about the Wii version because the controller really allows them to capture the

PREPARE FOR TAKEOFF

TWO WAYS TO FLY



Heatseeker will offer two controls schemes, each of which lends the game a very different feel. The first allows you to basically lead your plane with the pointer, while the second lets you use the nunchuk like a flight stick.

FLYING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

HEAT SOURCES

Heatseeker takes inspiration from a wide variety of sources—some you'd expect, some not so much. Let's take a look.

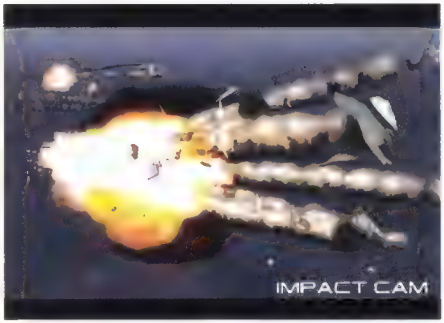
AFTERBURNER
Sega's 1987 arcade classic is the granddaddy of air combat, and Heatseeker takes the same straightforward, white-knuckle approach to the genre.

ROGUE SQUADRON
Heatseeker's overall feel and pacing are reminiscent of Factor 5's Rogue Squadron series. There's a lot going on in each mission, and you're never at a loss for a target.

BURNOUT
The Impact Cam's glorified explosions provide the same type of guilty pleasure as Burnout's spectacular slow-motion crashes.

arcade feel they're going for. The current plan is to offer two different control styles. The first employs the nunchuk like a flight stick—if you want to pull up, you simply tilt back on the controller. The second lets you steer the plane by pointing with the remote—to bank left, for example, you aim the remote toward the left side of the screen. You can turn more sharply by tilting the remote in the same direction. There's also a small "dead zone" in the middle of the display in which you can move the cursor without affecting the direction of your plane, making it somewhat easier to lock onto targets. (With the other scheme, the nose of your aircraft has to be pointed directly at the target.) Nevertheless, the nunchuk controls feel much more natural at this point in development. In fact, they sort of took us by surprise; no previous game has shown that the motion sensitivity in the nunchuk could be this responsive.

Both control schemes feature gesture-based evasion. When an enemy locks onto you with a missile, a message will flash across the screen instructing you to break a certain way. By quickly jerking the controller in that direction, you'll perform a barrel roll or loop-de-loop to avoid the incoming ordnance. Like many other Wii titles, it's trying to draw you into the experience like never before; to make you feel like you're really in the cockpit. That ambition is aided tremendously by some fantastic sound design. From the roar of your plane's engines to the thunderous explosions, all of the sound effects have a nice punch behind them. Visually, the game could still use some work, especially in terms of texture quality and polygon count. It moves at an impressively fast clip, though, making those shortcomings a bit more palatable.



It might be time for this base to update its defenses. Castle walls don't fare too well against fighter jets.

Pokémon
Mystery Dungeon
GINJI'S RESCUE TEAM
VOL. 6
BY MAKOTO MIZOBUCHI
SAVE THIS WORLD!!
THE HUMAN WHO BECAME A TORCHIC— GINJI'S FINAL BATTLE!!
TEARS AND EMOTIONS—IT'S THE FINAL CHAPTER!

ZGGGH
RUMBLE RUMBLE
THE FINAL BATTLE TO CALM THE LEGENDARY POKéMON!!
THAT WAS A B-BIG QUAKE!!
THESE NATURAL DISASTERS ARE HAPPENING BECAUSE GROUDON IS ABOUT TO AWAKEN.
THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN AVERT THIS DISASTER—
IS YOU, GINJI THE HUMAN.

NO!
WHAT, GINJI?
ME, SAVE THIS WORLD... CAN I REALLY DO THAT BY MYSELF?
EVERY-ONE IS HERE WITH ME!
YEAH!
LET'S GO!
I'M NOT ALONE!
OKAY!

RUMBLERUMBLE
HUH ?!
B-DUMP
HURRY AND WAKE UP SO YOU CAN BE MY SLAVE!
HEH HEH HEH, IT'S ALMOST TIME.
KP-AH

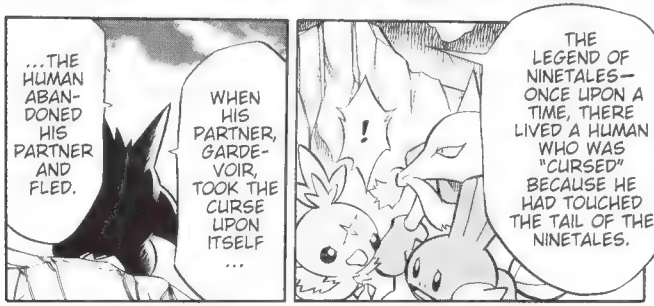
GROAR

WH-WHOAAH!!
FINALLY! GROUDON IS AWAKE!!
YES!
HMPH! I'M GONNA DEMOLISH THIS WORLD.

GGH
LOOK OVER THERE !!
!
TM TM TM
DOOM

GOOSH

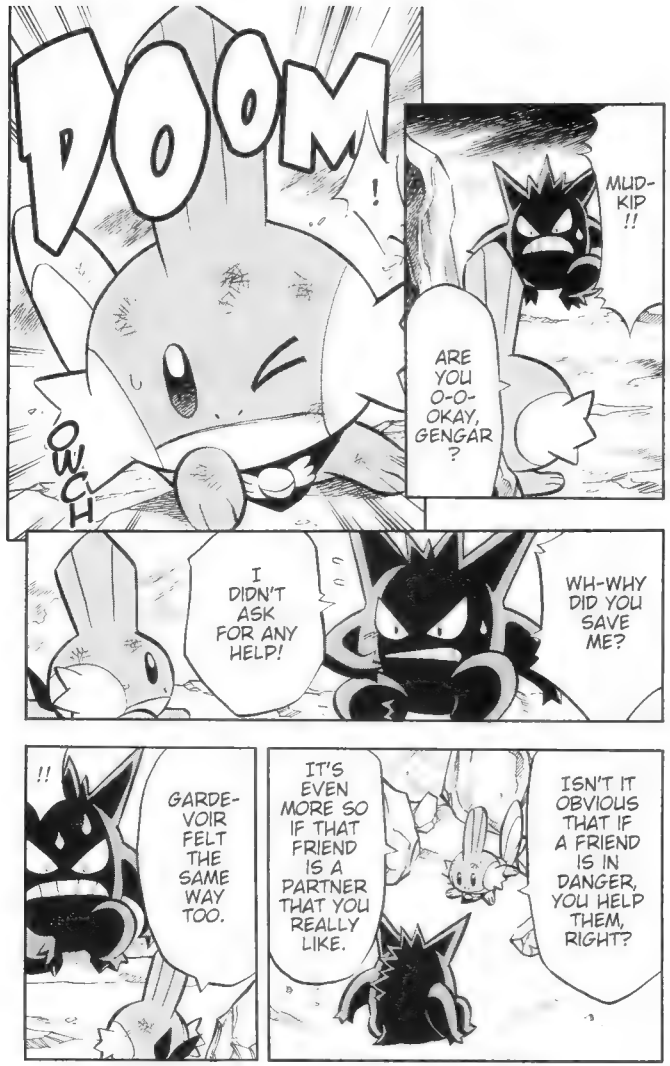
IT'S ALREADY AWAKE!!
G-GROUDON!


...THE HUMAN ABANDONED HIS PARTNER AND FLED.
WHEN HIS PARTNER, GARDEVOIR, TOOK THE CURSE UPON ITSELF ...
!
THE LEGEND OF NINETALES— ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE LIVED A HUMAN WHO WAS "CURSED" BECAUSE HE HAD TOUCHED THE TAIL OF THE NINETALES.

AND ONE THOUSAND YEARS LATER, THAT HUMAN WAS REBORN AS A POKéMON...
THAT'S ME!
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ANY CURSE, BUT TURNING ME INTO SOMETHING LIKE THIS ...
DON'T BOTHER, MUDKIP. WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO PLAY AROUND WITH SOMEONE LIKE THAT.
HOW COULD YOU ?!
I'LL GLADLY DESTROY A WORLD WHERE THAT HAPPENS!
GEN-GAR!
FINE!
BE THAT WAY.

GROAR
NO!
SHUSH
HEH HEH HEH!
IT'LL BE FUN WATCHING HOW FAR THAT TOUGH GUY ATTITUDE GETS YOU WHEN YOU'RE FIGHTING GROUDON.
WHAT?!
GGKKKK
AAAAAAH!
VWOSH

BAM
WATCH OUT!!
ZGGGM
!!
WHAT ?!


DOOM!
OWCH
MUD-KIP !!
ARE YOU O-O-OKAY, GENGAR ?
I DIDN'T ASK FOR ANY HELP!
WH-WHY DID YOU SAVE ME?
!!
GARDE-VOIR FELT THE SAME WAY TOO.
IT'S EVEN MORE SO IF THAT FRIEND IS A PARTNER THAT YOU REALLY LIKE.
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS THAT IF A FRIEND IS IN DANGER, YOU HELP THEM, RIGHT?

I KNOW THAT LOOK.
PLUS, EVEN THOUGH GINJI IS A HUMAN, HE'S STILL FRIENDS WITH US POKéMON.
THE SAME EYES AS THEN...THE SAME EYES AS GARDEVOIR'S!!
DASH
THAT'S RIGHT ...
GROO
!!
AAR

GRRRSH
ZDDGGM
!!
MUDKIP!!
GGHM

LET'S GO TOO, GUYS !!
GRRR! HOW COULD YOU?!
Zbbzzaap
GNOOOH

WHACK
BOOM
WAAAA
BOOM
BM
BM
BM
GOOAR

ITS POWER IS OFF THE CHARTS TOO!
SHOOT! ITS OUTER ARMOR IS SO STRONG !!
ZBRRRBAM
WE'RE ALL GONNA HAVE TO ATTACK SIMULTANEOUSLY IF WE HOPE TO DEFEAT THIS THING.
ZSH
THAT'S NOT GOING TO BE ENOUGH.

WE CAME TO HELP TOO, GINJI!!
BUT WHAT DO YOU MEAN THAT AN ALL-OUT COORDI-NATED ATTACK WON'T WORK?
GROUDON'S ARMOR IS TOO TOUGH.
EVERY-ONE!!

DOOM
...AND STRIKE WHEN ITS DEFENSES ARE DOWN!
SO YOU DISTRACT IT...
W-WELL ...
BUT HOW DO WE DO THAT?
BZZP BZZAP
WHAT NOW?!
...IT'S HEADED RIGHT FOR US!
OH NO! FAR FROM BEING DISTRACTED ...
NOOM
NOOM

BOOM
"DOUBLE-EDGE"
I DIDN'T RUN AWAY THIS TIME, NINE-TALES.
HEH HEH.
GEN-GAR.
WOBBLE
GENGAR?!

YUP.
YOU'RE OKAY?!
NOW'S THE TIME TO ATTACK!
TM TM TM TM
MUD-KIP !!
GENGAR PROTECTED ME FROM GROUDON'S ATTACK!
SO YOU FINALLY GOT IT, HUH, GENGAR?
LET'S DO THIS!
OKAY! WE'RE NOT GOING TO WASTE THIS OPPOR-TUNITY!
YEAH !!
GENGAR SAID TO ME, "I'M NOT RUNNING AWAY FROM MYSELF ANYMORE ..."

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING OF ALL.
YOU HAVE TO...

BELIEVE IN
YOUR FRIENDS!!

IT'S THE POWER OF ALL OF US COM-BINED INTO ONE!
GO!!
KABOOM

GGGNNNH
ZZDMM
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
Y...
....

YEAAAH!!!
WE DID IT!!!

YAY!
YAY!
WE DID IT!

WE SAVED THIS WORLD TOGETHER!!

YEAH.
WE DEFEATED GROUDON! THIS WORLD IS SAVED!

YAY!
YAY!
YA...
FWOOH
FWOOH
GRIP
GRIP

I'VE BECOME A HUMAN AGAIN!!
OH MY G-
CHIRP
CHIRP
WELL... DUH, HUH?
!
...A DREAM ?!
THEN WAS THAT ALL...

HEY!!
THAT'S RIGHT! IT WASN'T A DREAM!
GRAB

RIGHT NOW, HE'S PROBABLY...
IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY. I'M HERE NOW!
I'M OFF TO SCHOOL!!
I'M GOING TO GIVE IT MY BEST TOO!!
THE END

THIS EPISODE CONCLUDES
NINTENDO POWER'S
SIX-PART POKÉMON MYSTERY
DUNGEON COMIC.
WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED
THE ADVENTURE!

2006 Pokemon
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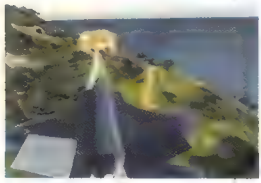
2006 Makoto MIZOBUCHI.
First published by Shogakukan Inc. in Japan as "Pokémon Fushigi no Danyon Ginji no Kyuujotai."

Heatseeker takes place in the year 2017, so expect to encounter some futuristic technology.



Highway to the Danger Zone

Heatseeker's tour of duty spans 18 missions that take you from a lush Caribbean paradise to the frozen canyons of the Antarctic. During our time with the game, we protected a carrier fleet from incoming aircraft, submarines, and even cruise missiles, then led an assault on a secret fortress that wouldn't look out of place in a Bond flick. According to Wensley, there's even a stealth mission that requires you to fly under a radar field, close to the surface. Though one level really needs an excuse to blow stuff up, there's a story behind the wanton destruction. "ACCN style news channel pops up between missions to give you a global perspective on what's happening," says Wensley. "However, we get the military briefing details [on] what's actually happening [and] give you the background to the fighting. Although it's all fairly weapon smuggling and superpower standoffs. As Wensley puts it, the underlying philosophy of the states involved is "Peace through superior firepower."

> **"We're basing it on reality—real planes, real weapons—but we're taking all these principles on how they work and moving them to make it really, really arcadey."**
>
> —Andrew Wensley

To that end, you have access to a potential collection of seven fighter jets, including the F-15 Eagle, the F-22 Raptor, the F-35 Lightning II, and the Russian Su-47 Berkut. Bolt-on fighting hidden objectives are scattered throughout the missions, and you can add on a weapon packs for your aircraft. Most of the planes have between three such packs, which consist of everything from cluster bombs to guided missiles (which you control). Each plane has different attributes and specialties, so the choice is yours. Some missiles, for example, require you to maintain a lock on your target until the missile homes in and destroys it, and target-painting bombs must be dropped from a high altitude to be effective. Others, however, can be fired and forgotten. "We're basing it on reality—real planes, real weapons," explains Wensley. "But we're taking all these principles on how they work and moving them to make it really, really arcadey."

For the most part, this looks like clear skies ahead for Heatseeker. Much like release. Our biggest disappointment is that the game doesn't include any sort of multiplayer mode. "Believe me, nobody would be more excited about the prospect of Heatseeker death matches than us," laments Wensley, "but we've decided to use this time to create a solid single-player campaign. If that formula proves a success, the next Ace Combat will be more than happy to fill [the] void."

NOT-SO-FRIENDLY SKIES
AIR SUPERIORITY

Heatseeker features more than 30 current and near-future fighter jets from manufacturers Boeing and Lockheed Martin. Here are three of our favorites (the ones Codemasters will let us talk about, anyway).

SR-71 BLACKBIRD
Though not as stealthy as it looks, this now-retired reconnaissance plane flew so fast that the standard evasive action against a surface-to-air missile was simply to accelerate.

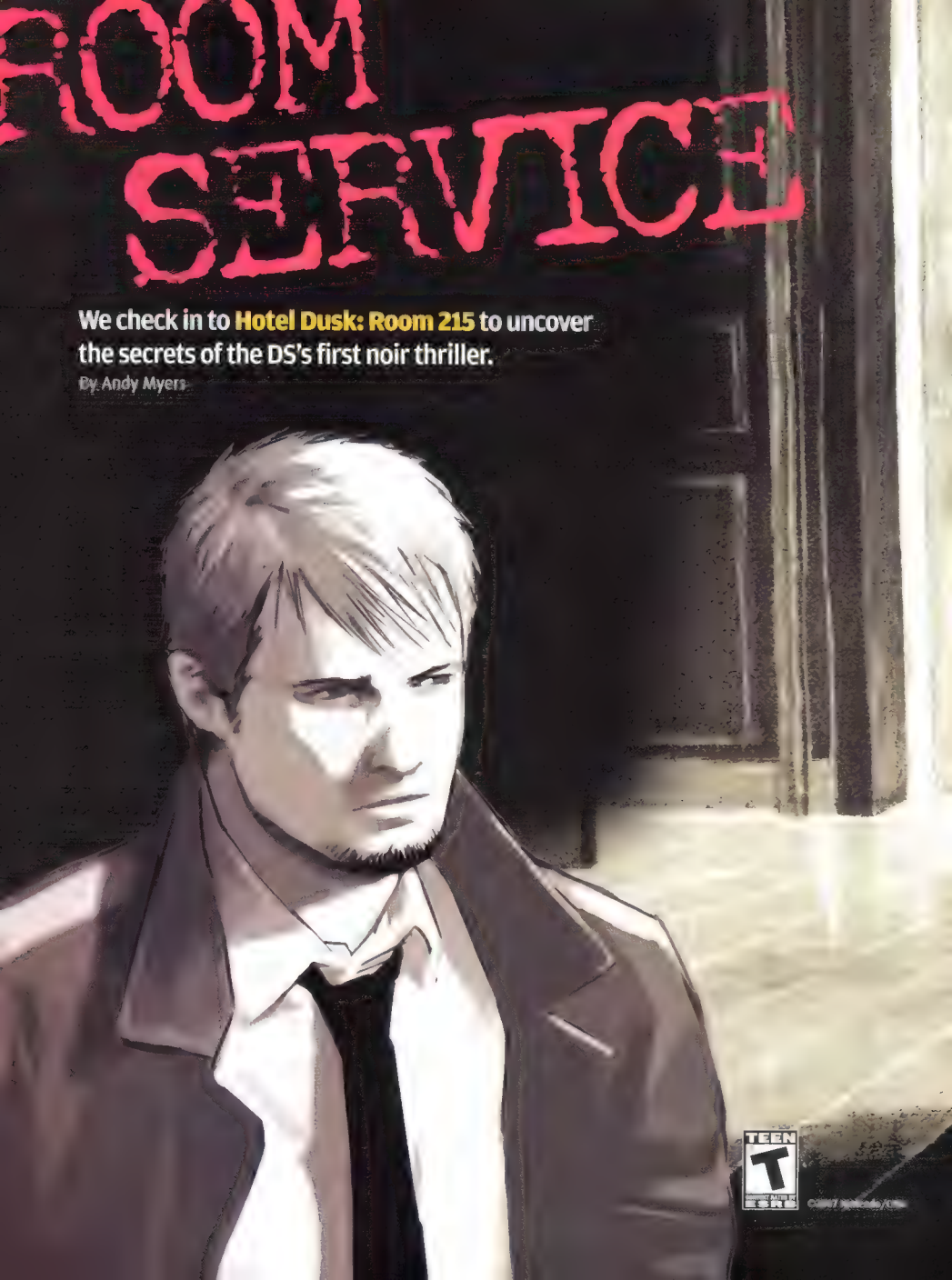
F-15 EAGLE
This classic fighter was first introduced in 1976, but is still considered one of the best air-superiority jets in existence.

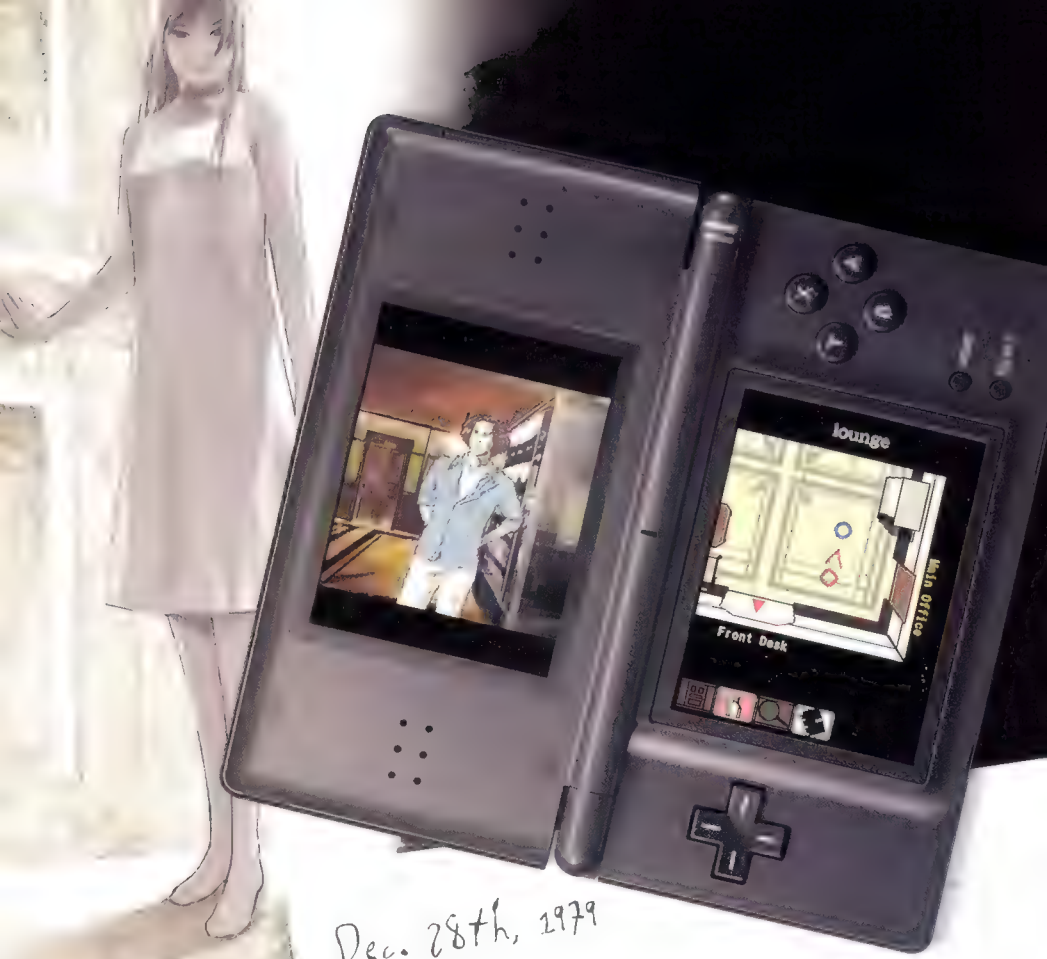
F-22 RAPTOR
This stealth fighter is the most advanced aircraft currently in service. It's suited for multiple roles, and is also the world's most expensive fighter at $120 million per unit.

ROOM SERVICE

We check in to **Hotel Dusk: Room 215** to uncover the secrets of the DS's first noir thriller.

By Andy Myers





Dec. 28th, 1979

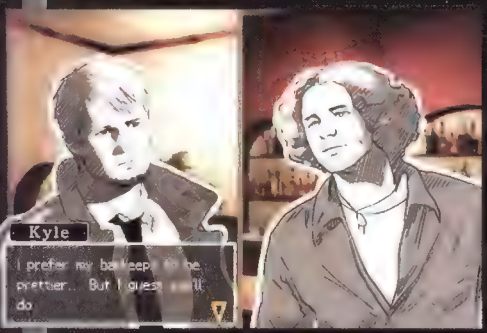
it's a strange place to lay your head, this Hotel Park. from the moment i rang the bell on the front desk, i knew there was something different from all the other dumps i've stayed at. Something special . . . something that might lead me to Bradley. . . .

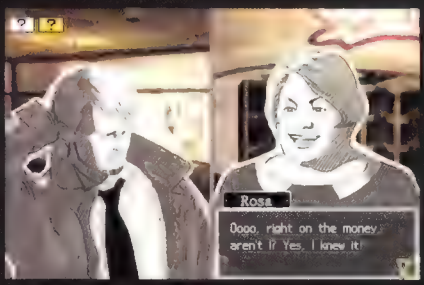
Ever been someplace where things just seem a little bit off? That's the vibe in Hotel Dusk: Room 215, a provocative DS title from Cing, the development team responsible for Trace Memory. In addition to spending some quality hands-on time with the game, we sat down with Nintendo localization writers Tim O'Leary and Alan Averill—the duo responsible for the dialogue in the game's English version—to bring you the lowdown on the DS's most daring adventure yet.

a novel idea

The year is 1979. You're Kyle Hyde, a burned-out ex-cop searching for a missing friend. This "friend"—Bradley—was your partner on the force, until he stabbed you in the back and skipped town with a stolen painting. But life is different now. You're a door-to-door salesman working for Red Crown, your years as a big-city detective behind you—at least that's what you keep telling yourself. Your next stop on Red Crown's dime is Hotel Dusk, an old place on the outskirts of LA. But something's odd about the hotel. Somehow this place connects to Bradley. Naturally, your detective instincts kick in; the more clues you find, the closer you get to the truth.

"Hyde's a burnout; fired; a guy who is so driven by this one thing in his life, that he's just thrown everything else away," exclaims localization writer Alan Averill. "I mean, in video games, the heroes are almost always so good. And even if they're flawed, they're usually flawed in a kind of vague way. But Hyde's a jerk. We don't get to write jerks, and . . . it was fun." Kyle's unfriendly behavior rears its head as soon as he sets foot in the hotel and starts interacting with its patrons. You'll cross paths with the most random cast of characters imaginable, from Louie Denonno, the punk kid from the streets of Manhattan who now works odd jobs at the hotel, to Martin Summer, a snobbish, middle-aged murder-mystery novelist looking for inspiration. "Some of the characters you're going to like, some you're not going to like," states Tim O'Leary. "There isn't a stereotypical hero or villain in this game, because it's not a stereotypical game."



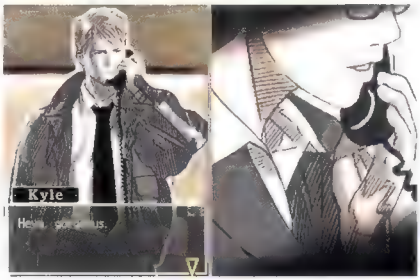


Dusk's unique qualities go beyond its quirky cast of characters. The truth is that it's as much an interactive novel as it is a video game. The game is divided into chapters; and to play it you must flip the DS on its side as if it were a book. Dusk's heavy story and complex characters lend themselves well to this format, as the majority of the game involves reading dialogue. As Averill puts it: "If you're the guy who skips all the text in Fire Emblem, this is not the game for you."

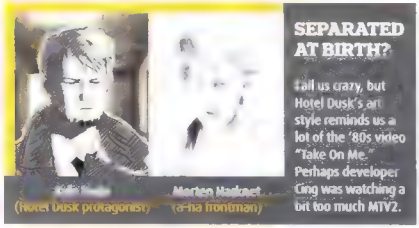
> **"We don't usually get to write jerks, and . . . it was fun."**
>
> **—Alan Averill (localization writer)**

reap what you sow

“With [Hotel Dusk], it’s definitely a noir-esque theme. But being that it’s set in ‘79, it’s much more modern than that.”



new noir



SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

Call us crazy, but Hotel Dusk’s art style reminds us a lot of the ‘80s video “Take On Me.” Perhaps developer Cing was watching a bit too much MTV2.

puzzling endeavors

Though dialogue plays a major role in Hotel Dusk, it's still a video game, and full of fitting challenges. There are two types of puzzles in Hotel Dusk: The traditional kind usually involves a touch-screen activity, often solving [illegible] that you face-to-face. [illegible] solved [illegible] the stylus [illegible] experienced with the game. There's [illegible] Ashley explains the hotel's [illegible] perplexed [illegible] [illegible] "Before [illegible] [illegible] touch it. Even [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

SNACK ATTACK
PINK
COOL COMPANY
IN THE PINK
TOGETHERNESS
MILK CHOCOLATE
Reese's
2 PEANUT BUTTER CUPS
MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES

EARTHBOUND

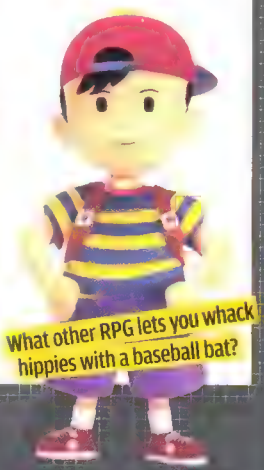
The 'burbs get a bit weirder in EarthBound, the quirkiest RPG of all time.

PLATFORM: SNES
DEVELOPER: APE
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
RELEASE DATE: JUNE 1995
COVERED IN ISSUES: 69, 70, 73, 74, 76, 77, 86, 91, 94, 128
NEW-AGE RETRO HIPPIES: INFINITE

For some, EarthBound is simply a Super Nintendo game that happened to come in an oversized box. For others, it's an underappreciated masterpiece. Although not all gamers see eye to eye on EarthBound's level of greatness, one thing's for sure—it's notoriously strange. EarthBound came out during the 16-bit era, when RPGs were all about casting spells, saving princesses, and slaying dragons. But you'll find nothing of the sort in EarthBound. The game defies tradition in almost every way, from its bizarre story and characters to its wacky weapons and locales.

EarthBound follows the story of Ness, a young boy from a suburb called Onnett who sets out to stop an alien invasion. While Ness's quest may sound straightforward, every step of the way will bring you face-to-face with some of the strangest occurrences in video games. Rather than the usual crop of RPG monsters, you'll encounter enemies such as spontaneously combusting trees, evil hippies, bass guitars that shoot lightning, and cult members obsessed with the color blue. When your party is injured, you won't use potions to restore health, but rather you'll employ items such as pizza or French fries with ketchup. Psychic powers replace magic. And instead of status effects like being poisoned or turning to stone, you'll get homesick and need to call your mom, or you'll get a cold and suffer sneeze fits during battle. At one point, you'll face a giant pile of puke called Master Barf, who attacks by—you guessed it—burping on you.

The anomalies go on and on, but they're only a part of what fans love about EarthBound. The game is also a lengthy and challenging RPG, full of unexpected plot twists and complex character development. Nothing is as it seems in Ness's world, but everything—no matter how ridiculous—is there for a reason. There truly has never been another game like it—well, in North America, at least. In Japan, EarthBound (known there as Mother 2) has both a prequel on NES and sequel on Game Boy Advance. On this side of the pacific, EarthBound lives on through the Super Smash Bros. series, in which Ness is a favorite fighter. Whether EarthBound will show up on Wii's Virtual Console remains to be seen, but even if it never does, it will go down in history as one of the most beloved RPGs ever made. —ANDY M.



Have a favorite classic game you'd like to see revisited?
Send us your requests—we'll consider them for a future installment of Play!
pulse@nintendopower.com

MOTHER NATURE

The EarthBound-obsessed are the most devoted fans in all of video games. Don't believe us? Check out Starmen.net, a long-running, high-traffic fan site that has become the unofficial hub of all things EarthBound (and the Mother series in general). Over the years, Starmen.net's inhabitants have submitted to Nintendo Power some crazy stuff, including a bound petition signed by over 30,000 fans demanding the release of Mother 3. Below are two of our favorite submissions.

NP SIEGE

Starmen.net occasionally organizes something called NP Siege, which consists of soliciting a boatload of Mother fan art, then sending it all at once to the magazine. This effort has produced some of the best fan art we've ever received.

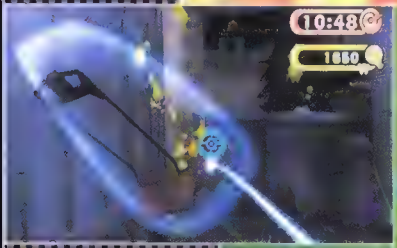
EARTHBOUND TATTOOS

EarthBound fans are in it for life, and some—such as Starmen.net reader Joey C.—are willing to go to great lengths to prove it.

REVIEWS

In-depth reviews of the latest games

WarioWare: Smooth Moves is short but oh so sweet.



94
Electronic Arts' Medal of Honor: Rising Sun takes over the PS2, Xbox and PC

97
Square Enix's Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles: Ring of Fates takes over the DS

96
Capcom's Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney takes over the DS in its 3rd episode

+ Super Swing Golf, Star Wars: Lethal Alliance, Kirby Squeak Squad, and more.

A REAL MOVER AND SHAKER

WARIOWARE: SMOOTH MOVES

RATING: 9.0

PLATFORM Wii
PUBLISHER Nintendo
DEVELOPER Nintendo
ESRB: Everyone

One of the most compelling aspects of Wii control is the way that it pulls the action out of the game and brings it into the real world. Wii Sports started the ball rolling with its move-matching sports games, making the physical workout and interaction between players as important as what's happening onscreen. WarioWare: Smooth Moves (the latest entry in the frenzied WarioWare series, with more than 200 all-new microgames) takes the concept to the next level. In typical WarioWare style, the game makes the most of its platform by incorporating the Wii console's functionality into every feature. It starts with the introduction of 19 "forms" that have you posing with the Wii remote (and in one case with the nunchuk). Forms range from the conventional Remote Control stance to the absurd Elephant posture (holding the Wii remote as if it were a nose extension). You strike a pose at the beginning of each microgame, then perform a gesture to complete it. A microgame that requires the Mohawk form, for example, starts with you holding the remote over your head. You may find yourself jumping over obstacles, leaning to avoid projectiles, or performing a deep knee bend. Though the game is a fun solo experience, it begs for a room full of participants, all taking on awkward stances. Unfortunately, multiplayer options don't unlock until you've completed the single-player story mode (presumably to learn the poses before you perform in front of a group). Nevertheless, the segmented structure of the single-player mode allows multiple people to pass the controller and try their hands at a batch of microgames. Smooth Moves follows the structure of its predecessors. Every group of games is hosted by a character or pair of characters, starting with a brief story setup. By completing the games, you help the characters reach their goals. For the first section Wario enters the Temple of Form, where he runs off with the Form Baton (the game's mythological version of the Wii remote). As he escapes Indiana Jones-style, you complete microgames to stave off the giant boulder that's chasing him. Smooth Moves introduces sidekicks for established characters 9-Volt and Ashley, and new game hosts Penny and Young Cricket. In previous WarioWare titles, many of the microgames followed themes set by their hosts. In Smooth Moves, the games are tied more to the forms than to the characters, with the exception of those presented by Nintendo enthusiast 9-Volt who gives us snippets of old-school titles. One of his games, based on a microgame from WarioWare: Twisted!, has you rotate a Game Boy Advance within the game to complete the task. Other 9-Volt microgames revisit Super Mario Bros., Wario Land, and The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker, five seconds at a time.

Most players will be able to get through the character-hosted sections in a few hours, making the game seem like a short play. If you're a completist, though, unlocking all of the microgames and collectible pose cards will take much more time. The credits for the single-player game also mark the beginning of the multiplayer options, which are pass-around-the-controller microgame collections and minigames that make a perfect centerpiece for game-playing gatherings.

The WarioWare titles deliver a tightly paced experience with over-the-top humor and a lot of activities that you wouldn't normally see in a video game (flipping pancakes, washing a cow's behind, sweeping leaves). Smooth Moves continues in that tradition, and incorporates motion control to keep it fresh. The game also adopts a zenlike atmosphere when introducing the new forms and unlocking pose cards. The few moments that it gives you to reflect also allow you to rest—a good idea, considering that Smooth Moves is much more physically demanding than previous titles. In fact, the goal for Dr. Crygor's microgame collection is to give his Kelorometer a spin and turn your flabby game character into a svelte athlete. Though Smooth Moves may not seem deep, the fact that it offers physical play and draws a crowd should make it a permanent fixture in a lot of Wii consoles. —George S.

Be a poser, not a poseur.

WRITERS' BLOCK

The Wii shopping channel is up and running. We asked our reviewers which classic games they're downloading first.

CHRIS HOFFMAN

Golden Axe is one of my favorite games ever—the feeling of slicing into enemies is supremely satisfying. After that, I'll go prehistoric with Bonk's Adventure.

CHRIS SHEPPERD

I have only vague memories of playing Solomon's Key as a kid, but I seem to recall it being pretty fun. I'm looking forward to revisiting the Tecmo classic.

ANDY MYERS

Where do I start? R-Type, Space Harrier II, Bomberman '93, Mario 64—of all the games, though, I'm probably most excited for Bonk's Adventure. It's been a long time, baby.

GEORGE SINFIELD

Not a month goes by without Steve putting Gunstar Heroes into a conversation about overlooked games. Having not played it the first time around, I'm looking forward to giving it a try.

STEVE THOMASON

I [illegible] TurboGrafx, so I'm anxious to finally play Bonk's Adventure and Dungeon Explorer. I'm also gonna reunite with my boys Toejam & Earl. I've been suffering from a serious funk deficiency.

I was stuck in a Mexican jail when Gunstar Heroes originally came out for Sega Genesis, so I'm keeping an eye out for that 16-bit treasure.

FAR CRY: VENGEANCE

RATING: 4.0

PLATFORM: Wii
PUBLISHER: Ubisoft
DEVELOPER: Ubisoft Montreal
ESRB: Mature

Considering its pedigree, Far [illegible] the first-person shooter!

– Steve T

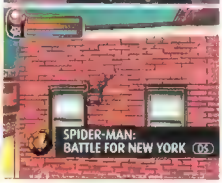
HE'S GOT GUTS

KIRBY: SQUEAK SQUAD

RATING: 7.5

PLATFORM: Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER: Nintendo
DEVELOPER: HAL Laboratory Inc.
ESRB: Everyone

It seemed inevitable that some game in the Kirby series would touch upon the pink guy's digestive system, but I doubt anyone expected to use the character's alimentary canal as a resource-management system. Don't worry: you don't have to collect 1-ups after Kirby goes to the bathroom. Kirby: Squeak Squad puts the little sucker's stomach front and center on the touch screen, where you can activate power-ups and abilities at will (you can keep up to five objects in your stomach at a time). It's a handy tool, but hardly an earth-shattering update to the same suck-and-copy mechanic that drives every Kirby platform-adventure. It's fun to combine abilities to see what happens (they usually morph into a random third ability) and nice to have offensive options during boss battles, but any of the touch-screen functions probably could have been handled easily in a menu on the Game Boy Advance. In most cases, the level design is [illegible] to provide you with the ability you need when you need it, which takes some of steam out of the touch-screen power-up features. The look of the game is also getting a bit shopworn—you won't find many flashy environments or jaw-dropping effects here. Flagship stuck with more or less the same 2-D graphics conventions that were found in the Kirby GBA titles. The good news is that Squeak Squad doesn't need a whopping dose of DS innovation or pretty environments to make it enjoyable—it's a big, mildly challenging adventure with gobs of gameplay variety and replay value. It's nice to have a handful of new abilities—like Animal Kirby, who can tunnel through soft dirt and slash foes like a pelt-covered pink Wolverine—but you'll find that Kirby's manifestations from past games seem no less fun than when they made their debut. No need for Pepto-Bismol, my friends. HAL has cooked up another lightweight soufflé of fun that Kirby fans will find easy to stomach. – Drew W.



ELECTRIC COMPANY

ELEBITS

RATING: 7.5

PLATFORM: Wii
PUBLISHER: Konami
DEVELOPER: Konami
ESRB: Everyone

Part Pikmin, part Gremlin, Elebits are the source of electricity in Konami's zap-and-capture shooter which starts in a suburban home, then moves to the streets. The Wii remote allows you to manage a Capture Beam and the game's first-person-perspective camera. The object is to gather energy by using the beam to both shoot the scurrying Elebits and toss household items out of the way. There are 20 types of Elebits. Some give you wattage, which activates appliances and other electronic gadgets (producing more Elebits). Others increase the strength of the Capture Beam, allowing you to lift increasingly heavy objects until you can levitate, turn, and shake tables and armoires (you start weak at the beginning of every story-mode level and build strength). The remote's point-and-shoot control is extremely accurate, allowing you pick off Elebits from a distance and make a big, satisfying mess. The only thing that you have to watch out for is creating so much debris that you can't move (your character is incapable of jumping). The game is built for bull-in-a-china-shop destruction, but it's less successful in areas that require intricate manipulation. Frustration sets in after you've tried and failed several times to pull clothes out of a hamper and place them in a washing machine (to activate the machine). Another source of frustration is the limitations put on some story-mode levels. If you exceed an arbitrary limit on how many fragile items you can destroy or how much noise you can make, the game is over. Though the restrictions are intended to encourage you to use strategy as you play, they only succeed in putting a damper on the destructive excitement. You can almost hear the developers saying, "Have fun, but not too much fun." The restrictions are lifted in the level-revisiting Score Attack mode, level-creating Edit mode, and Multiplayer mode (in which up to four players battle to wrangle Elebits, each taking turns controlling the camera). There are plans to allow players to share Edit-mode levels through the WiiConnect24 service. Though the overall game's shooting-gallery concept is somewhat shallow, Konami has gone to great lengths to add depth through a lot of modes and unlockables. If making a mess without cleaning it up appeals to you, plug in to Elebits.
—George S.

SUPER SWING GOLF

RATING: 7.5

PLATFORM: Wii
PUBLISHER: Tecmo
DEVELOPER: Ntreev Soft/Tecmo
ESRB: Everyone

Super Swing Golf takes the same arcade-style approach as titles like Mario Golf and Hot Shots Golf, yet it manages to stand out thanks largely to the controls. Swinging the Wii remote as you would a golf club works remarkably well and proves to be a lot of fun. The developers have struck a nice balance—the controls feel authentic without requiring you to be good at the actual sport. It still takes a bit of practice, but the learning curve isn't significantly steeper than in any other golf game. Tons of unlockables, a branching story mode, four-player competitions, and a strong assortment of fantastical courses make for a robust package. As long as you don't mind the cartoonish character designs, the colorful visuals are appealing as well. The only real downside is that the computer opponents can be wildly inconsistent. —Steve T.

CHICKEN LITTLE: ACE IN ACTION

RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM: Wii
PUBLISHER: Buena Vista
DEVELOPER: Avalanche
ESRB: Everyone 10+

It would be easy to dismiss Ace in Action as yet another lukewarm, movie-licensed cash-in, but it would also be a mistake -there's actually an impressive game here, at least for a while. The colorful platformer starts out well, quickly stirring memories of the acclaimed Ratchet & Clank series: you fight through waves of enemies, activate locks via minigames, and collect money to buy new weapons. The controls are tight and responsive, again showing that the Wii can handle conventional genres just fine when they're done correctly. But the action gets old quickly, largely due to a limited number of enemies and a breakdown in level design (areas get recycled way too often in later levels). What will keep you captivated until the end is the humorous story and accompanying voice work by the original movie actors. Ace in Action isn't great, but don't overlook it as just another movie game. — Chris S.

SPIDER-MAN: BATTLE FOR NEW YORK

RATING: T

PLATFORM: Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER: Activision
DEVELOPER: Torus
ESRB: Everyone 10+

Last year's Ultimate Spider-Man surprised DS owners with a satisfying blend of platforming and storytelling. Unfortunately, Battle for New York doesn't quite follow suit. The game is built on the same engine as Ultimate Spider-Man, and uses many of the same tricks that made the first game so fun. Instead of switching between Spider-Man and Venom stages, you'll control Spider-Man and Green Goblin as their paths cross throughout the story. Unlike Venom (who you controlled with a unique touch-screen setup), Green Goblin plays a lot like Spider-Man minus the web-swinging action. Spidey controls like a charm, but the game gets stuck in a rut due to its inconsistent level design, and never quite finds its way out. Still, it's a decent platformer that fans of Ultimate Spider-Man comics will find mildly entertaining. —Andy M.

TONY HAWK'S DOWNHILL JAM

RATING 7.5

PLATFORM Wii
PUBLISHER Activision
DEVELOPER Toys for Bob
ESRB Everyone 10+

It says Tony Hawk right there on the box—and the Birdman himself is a playable character in the game but Downhill Jam is essentially SSX with a lot less snow. Everything from the skater bon mots to the trick-fueled boost meter seem to be shamelessly lifted from that snow boarding franchise (which borrowed quite a few ideas from the Tony Hawk franchise in the first place, so I guess it's OK). Moreover, THDJ's graphics are a bit subpar, its course designs can seem uninspired at times, and it's a little buggy in places. Its one redeeming characteristic is that it's a hell of a lot of fun to play. The races are lighting-fast, unlockable content is always within your grasp, and, most importantly, the intuitive control scheme immerses you in the game. Even though it may betray you occasionally on tight turns and complicated tricks, the Wii remote was clearly born to shred. And you'll need the fast-twitch response time—the courses whiz past you fast enough to induce vertigo, even in split-screen play (up to four people can compete head-to-head). You'll want to make a friend—if you don't already have one—and stick with multiplayer mode after you rip through the relatively easy Downhill Challenge single-player mode. If you lack the charisma necessary to retain friends, you can always save ghost runs and try to beat yourself again and again. Downhill Jam will almost certainly surrender its extreme-sports crown by the time the next generation of Wii games ollies onto the scene, but for now it's the best way I can think of to get down a hill. —Drew W.

XIAOLIN SHOWDOWN

RATING 5.0

PLATFORM Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER Konami
DEVELOPER Razorback Developments
ESRB Everyone

Xiaolin Showdown is a [illegible] that features a cast of multi-ethnic youngsters who perform elaborate kung fu moves. It's also an exasperating DS brawler with a smattering of "showdown" minigames on the touch screen. Razorback Developments did a nice job replicating the look of the cartoon, but the isometric perspective throughout much of the [illegible] of like the Cheerbots you'll have to fight: pretty and dumb. The level design often forces you to progress diagonally across [illegible] chop-socky versions of [illegible] your DS didn't come with an eight-direction joystick. The result is hinky control as you try to fight wave after wave of monotonous [illegible] and [illegible] lasers and pits. Most of the time, the kung fu fighting amounts to [illegible] button mash—but [illegible] up enough [illegible] can execute one of their many, destructive Shen Gong Wu attacks. For the few brief moments that [illegible] can unleash moves like the Sword of the Storm or the Third Arm Sash, Xiolin Showdown's marginally interesting. The rest of the time it's [illegible] marginal. —Drew W.

THE BEST FOR LAST

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS

RATING 9.5

PLATFORM Nintendo GameCube
PUBLISHER Nintendo
DEVELOPER Nintendo
ESRB Teen

With twilight being a time of transition, it's fitting that The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess should be the last great adventure on the Nintendo GameCube and the first one on Wii. The game is near perfect on both systems, the main differences being a classic adventuring control scheme for the GCN game versus motion-based control for the Wii game (reviewed last issue), and an axis flip that makes Link right-handed on Wii (to conform to its remote-in-the-right-hand controls) and left-handed on the GCN (he's been a southpaw in previous games). The switch forces east on the GCN versions to be west on the Wii version, and vice versa. Also, the GCN game doesn't let you swing your arm as you would a sword, but since it takes less time to push a button than it does to whip a remote, the basic attack is just a tad more responsive on the GCN than it is on Wii. And, the GCN controller's C Stick allows you to rotate the camera freely (good for checking your surroundings in complex dungeons), whereas the Wii nunchuk's C Button offers just a behind-the-back camera correction (perfectly functional, but a little more restrictive).

Wii-GCN comparisons aside, Twilight Princess is in the upper echelon of Legend of Zelda games, right up there with Ocarina of Time and A Link to the Past. Link's big trick for the new adventure is his ability to turn into a wolf. Unfortunately, there's a little too much of the canine form (and its limited abilities) in the first third, when the game should be about Link trying to fill the hero's shoes, but a second-act change (which gives Link the freedom to transform into a human or wolf as he wishes) brings everything together for a rousing good play. Not only does the game have a great good-evil-and-gray-area story with compelling twists (and terrific cut-scenes that never drag on) and the most interesting new character to come around in a long time (wolf-rider Midna), but it gives us a huge, lively world full things to do outside of completing the story (a handful of minigames, three item-collection side missions, and the supertough Cave of Ordeals). Twilight Princess was a long time coming, but the game's depth will make it last even longer among the Zelda faithful. —George S.

STAR WARS: LETHAL ALLIANCE

RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER Ubisoft
DEVELOPER Ubisoft Morocco
ESRB Everyone 10+

For all of its ground-breaking titles, the DS library has been lacking in traditional third-person 3-D adventures. Ubisoft's first exclusive-to-DS Star Wars game, though rough around the edges, fills that category nicely. Twi'lek mercenary Rianna Seran and security droid Zeeo, both new to the Star Wars universe, form the alliance of the game's title. Running-and-shooting sections, which account for about 80 percent of the game, give Rianna the spotlight as she locks onto enemies, strafes, rolls, and enlists Zeeo in team attacks. (The strength of the alliance is displayed on a meter, but it has little or no effect on the way the characters work together.) Straightforward level design keeps the pace quick and ensures that you won't get lost. When Rianna falters, she starts over within a short distance of her last location. Zeeo acts as a vehicle and as a means to hack into computer systems. The hacking sequences are touch-controlled minigames. Most are perfectly easy to understand but a few are real stumpers that will have you failing repeatedly before you decipher the convoluted instructions.

The story, which takes place before the events of *Episode IV*, covers Rianna's battles with baddie Kheev and the Rebel Alliance's attempts to stop the Empire from completing construction of the Death Star. It gives us a glimpse of established characters (Princess Leia, Boba Fett) and locations (Tatooine, Alderaan) but acts more as a stand-alone tale than an important part of the struggle between the sides. The battles are fun, but not very significant in the overall Star Wars universe. In the end, the game could have used a generic sci-fi world as its backdrop and would have been just as compelling and satisfying to play. — George S.

NEED FOR SPEED: CARBON

RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM Wii
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts
DEVELOPER Electronic Arts
ESRB Everyone 10+

The Need for Speed series continues to sink into the overhyped world of midnight street racing, a sport that seems to exist only in Vin Diesel flicks and late-night local TV news. The clichés run wild—you play as a new guy on the scene, caught up in the middle of a multiway turf battle. You race to earn money and new rides as you conquer new 'hoods. The requisite tough guy and hot chick show up once in a while to move the paper-thin story forward. Weak plot aside, the racing succeeds on several fronts: there's a learning curve to using the Wii remote as a steering wheel, but when it finally clicks it feels good. Slow-motion drifting through corners is fun to do, but again, it takes a while to get used to. Although the racing is enjoyable and the visuals endurable, the level design is ultimately Carbon's downfall. There's no discernible theme to each of the boroughs: you feel like you're driving through same stretch of town over and over again. What Carbon does right bodes well for the racing genre on the Wii. What it does wrong bodes poorly for the future of this once-elite training franchise. — Chris S.

DO THE WRIGHT THING

PHOENIX WRIGHT: ACE ATTORNEY JUSTICE FOR ALL

RATING: 9.0

PLATFORM Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER Capcom
DEVELOPER Capcom
ESRB Teen

The verdict is in: Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney Justice for All is another superb graphic-text adventure from the folks at Capcom. Following the Mega Man school of sequel design, Justice for All isn't a radical departure from the original title's successful courtroom-drama formula, but it delivers more of the same great gameplay plus enough new twists to keep things interesting.

Once again, the legalese takes a backseat to an extremely likable cast of anime-inspired characters, a superb story (which connects nicely to the events of the first Phoenix Wright), and a humorous, top-notch translation (albeit one that's plagued by a few goofy typos). The process of drawing more information out of witnesses' testimonies and presenting evidence to break down their lies remains remarkably satisfying for players who don't mind their games heavy on dialogue and light on action (especially if you opt to yell into the microphone), and it's even more fun when you have to overcome additional obstacles such as being penalized for following improper lines of questioning. This game's investigation scenes, meanwhile, are much more enjoyable than in the first, since you now use your deductive skills outside the courtroom to break down potential witnesses' Psyche-Lock defenses in addition to exploring and engaging in conversation. It all culminates in a lengthy, challenging, supremely fulfilling final episode.

Justice for All does, however, fall prey to one of the endemic flaws of the genre: puzzles that occasionally seem arbitrary rather than clever. Though these instances are few and far between, they'll test the limits of less-patient players. That shouldn't stop literary-minded gamers from enlisting Phoenix's services; as far as graphic-text adventures go, Justice for All ranks among the very best. — Chris H.

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST: DUAL SYMPATHY

RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM Nintendo DS
PUBLISHER Destineer
DEVELOPER Bandai
ESRB Teen

The pseudoscience of alchemy doesn't necessarily lead to beating the heck out of waves of soldiers and monsters, but that's exactly what happens in Fullmetal Alchemist: Dual Sympathy. Based on the *Fullmetal Alchemist* manga and anime, Dual Sympathy is primarily a side-scrolling beat-'em-up in which you punch your way through 10 stages, but where other games of the same ilk fail due to monotonous gameplay, Fullmetal succeeds thanks to a good amount of variety, plenty of style, and top-notch production values that faithfully re-create the look and feel of the anime (complete with voice overs).

While the game's responsive button-mashing combat is solid foundation, it's pretty much limited to simple combo and jump attacks for the early, the inclusion of touch-screen-based alchemical abilities prevents the game from falling into beat-'em-up-by-the-numbers territory. With the touch of a finger, you can call a cannonball to blast flames, create a defensive wall, and more. Additionally, upgrading the context-sensitive abilities, which come in especially handy during the game's creative boss battles—they usually require both brains and brawn to win. Dual Sympathy also keeps things interesting through interspersed touch-screen minigames, such as drawing alchemical symbols, chopping wood, and the decidedly unheroic task of running away.

Although Fullmetal does a great job remaining true to its source material, it does so almost to a fault. The game boasts as much story content as the action, but the less-than-riveting condensed into the cutscenes makes it sometimes hard to follow. Dual Sympathy is also incredibly short—it can be only a few hours before you reach the final boss. However, what the game lacks in length, it makes up in its loads of unlockables, challenge, and multiplayer options, including ad hoc gallery modes. CHRIS H

ALSO THIS MONTH

Start as low as the 40s or you'll be the top in Activision's **World Series of Poker: Tournament of Champions** for Wi-Fi, local multiplayer card and Chips against other players. Advance as far as you can in the nigh-stakes world of pro fishing in **Rapala Tournament Fishing**. [illegible] to create [illegible] and [illegible] to [illegible] Research [illegible] Sharpen your [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[ARCHIVE]

HOT LAUNCH

Wii launch titles land in our archive this month, and nine achieved scores of 8.0 or higher. In their reviews, our critics noted clever use of motion control as the main reason for high Wii-game rankings. Among the standouts are the pointer-based surgery of Trauma Center: Second Opinion (8.5) and the tilt-to-turn driving action of Excite Truck (also 8.5). It should come as no surprise that Wii remote sword-swinging and lure-fishing brought The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess (9.5) to near-perfect status.

SCORES REFLECT INDIVIDUAL REVIEWERS' OPINIONS. • INDICATES WI-FI COMPATIBLE

Wii				
The Ant Bully	N/A	Midway	211	E10+
Avatar The Last Airbender	N/A	THQ	211	E10+
The Barnyard	N/A	THQ	211	E10+
Call of Duty 3	6.5	Activision	211	T
Cars	N/A	THQ	211	E
Dragon Ball Z Budokai Tenkaichi 2	7.0	Atari	211	T
Excite Truck	8.5	Nintendo	211	E
The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy	N/A	Midway	211	E10+
GT Pro Series	5.0	Ubisoft	211	E
Happy Feet	4.5	Midway	211	E
The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess	9.5	Nintendo	211	T
Madden NFL 07	8.5	Electronic Arts	211	E
Marvel Ultimate Alliance	8.0	Activision	211	T
Metal Slug Anthology	8.0	SNK Playmore USA	211	T
Monster 4x4 World Circuit	6.5	Ubisoft	211	E
Open Season	N/A	Ubisoft	211	E10+
Rampage: Total Destruction	6.5	Midway	211	E10+
Rayman Raving Rabbids	7.5	Ubisoft	211	E
Red Steel	8.0	Ubisoft	211	T
SpongeBob SquarePants: Creature from the Krusty Krab	7.0	THQ	211	E
Super Monkey Ball: Banana Blitz	8.5	Sega	211	E
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Double Agent	6.0	Ubisoft	211	M
Trauma Center: Second Opinion	8.5	Atlus	211	T
Wii Sports	8.0, 8.5	Nintendo	211	E
Nintendo GameCube				
2006 FIFA World Cup	7.5	Electronic Arts	204	E
American Chopper 2: Full Throttle	5.0	Activision	201	T
The Ant Bully	5.0	Midway	208	E10+
Avatar: The Last Airbender	7.0	THQ	210	E
The Barnyard	6.0	THQ	207	E10+
Baten Kaitos Origins	8.0	Nintendo	209	T
Bionicle Heroes	5.0	Eidos	211	E10+
Bratz: Forever Diamonds	N/A	THQ	210	E
Cabela's Dangerous Hunts 2	2.5	Activision	200	T
Call of Duty 2: Big Red One	7.5	Activision	200	T
Cars	6.5	THQ	206	E
Chaos Field	6.0	0–3	200	E
Chibi-Robo	8.0	Nintendo	201	E10+
Curious George	7.0	Namco	202	E
FIFA 07	8.0	Electronic Arts	210	E
FIFA Street 2	7.0	Electronic Arts	203	E
Flushed Away	6.5	D3PA	210	E
The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy	6.5	Midway	210	E10+
Happy Feet	N/A	Midway	211	E
Harvest Moon: Magical Melody	9.0, 9.5	Natsume	203	E
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	5.0	Vivendi	203	E10+
Kao the Kangaroo: Round 2	2.5	Atari	203	E
The Legend of Spyro: A New Beginning	5.5	Sierra	209	E10+
LEGO *Star Wars* II: The Original Trilogy	7.5	LucasArts	209	E10+
Madden NFL 07	9.0	Electronic Arts	208	E
Major League Baseball 2K6	7.0, 6.5, 6.0	2K Sports	205	E

REVIEWER NOTES

TOUCH DETECTIVE

I like Touch Detective's strange sense of humor and bizarre internal logic. But I don't like its over-reliance on using dialogue—in lieu of character actions—to trigger events that let you progress through the game's mysteries. The best part about point-and-click adventures is getting to find and use a variety of items, and there's just not enough of it in Touch Detective, particularly in the unsatisfying fourth episode.

—Chris H

>YOSHI'S ISLAND DS

I'm a fan of old-school difficulty levels for 2-D platformers, but Yoshi's Island DS seems more like old-fashioned cruelty. Maybe that's because I had to try to open everything. Maybe there's something wrong with me.

—Drew W.

RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS

Hailing from one of the most revered development teams in the world (the same team responsible for Beyond Good & Evil), I must admit I was slightly disappointed with Rayman Raving Rabbids. The game had a ton of potential with its disturbingly unique art direction and offbeat humor, and probably would have been one of the most memorable platformers ever. But somewhere along the line, it was downgraded to a simple collection of minigames—fun minigames, for sure, but minigames nonetheless.

—Andy M.

Mega Man X Collection	8.5	Capcom	208	E
Monster House	6.5	THQ	207	E10+
Naruto: Clash of Ninja	7.0	Tomy/D3PA	203	T
Naruto: Clash of Ninja 2	7.5	Tomy/D3PA	210	T
Need for Speed: Carbon	7.5	Electronic Arts	211	E10+
Nicktoons: Battle for Volcano Island	N/A	THQ	210	E
Ōdama	8.5	Nintendo	203	E10+
One Piece: Grand Adventure	5.5	Namco Bandai	208	T
One Piece: Pirates' Carnival	5.5	Namco Bandai	209	E
Open Season	6.0	Ubisoft	209	E10+
Over the Hedge	6.0	Activision	205	E10+
Pac-Man World Rally	5.5	Namco Bandai	208	E
Peter Jackson's King Kong	9.0	Ubisoft	200	T
Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones	9.0	Ubisoft	200	M
Rampage: Total Destruction	6.5	Midway	204	E10+
The Sims 2 Pets	6.5	Electronic Arts	211	E
Sonic Riders	8.0	Sega	203	E
SpongeBob SquarePants Creature from the Krusty Krab	3.5	THQ	210	E
Super Monkey Ball Adventure	5.5	Nintendo	206	E
Teen Titans	6.0	Majesco	204	E10+
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Double Agent	4.5	Ubisoft	210	M
Tomb Raider: Legend	7.5	Eidos	211	T
X-Men: The Official Game	6.5	Activision	205	T
Nintendo DS				
2006 FIFA World Cup	7.0	Electronic Arts	203	E
Age of Empires: The Age of Kings	8.0	Majesco	201	E10+
Alex Rider: Stormbreaker	4.5	THQ	208	T
Avatar: The Last Airbender	6.5	THQ	210	E
Battles of Prince of Persia	6.5	Ubisoft	200	E10+
Bionicle Heroes	N/A	Eidos	211	T
Blades of Thunder 2	4.5	Summitsoft	201	E10+
Bomberman Land Touch!	7.0	Atlus	211	E
Bratz: Forever Diamonds	N/A	THQ	210	E
Break 'Em All	7.0	D3PA	206	E
Bubble Bobble Revolution	6.0	Codemasters	208	E
Bust-a-Move DS	7.5	Majesco	200	E
Cars	5.5	THQ	206	E
• Castlevania: Portrait of Ruin	9.0	Konami	211	T
Catz	N/A	Ubisoft	211	E
Charlotte's Web	6.0	Sega	211	E
Chicken Little: Ace in Action	6.5	Buena Vista	210	E
Children of Mana	6.5	Nintendo	210	E10+
• Clubhouse Games	7.0	Nintendo	209	E
• Contact	8.5	Atlus	209	E10+
Cooking Mama	7.0	Majesco	209	E
Crash Boom Bang!	4.8	Sierra	209	E
Deep Labyrinth	6.0	Atlus	208	E10+
Dino Master	5.5	Majesco	205	E
Disney's American Dragon: Jake Long Attack of the Dark Dragon	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E
Doge	N/A	Ubisoft	211	E
Dragon Booster	6.0	Konami	200	E
Dragon Quest Heroes: Rocket Slime	9.0	Square Enix	208	E
Electroplankton	8.5	Nintendo	200	E
Elf Bowling 1 & 2	N/A	Ignition	200	T
Elite Beat Agents	9.5	Nintendo	210	E10+
Eragon	N/A	Nintendo	211	T
FIFA 07	N/A	Electronic Arts	210	E
FIFA Street 2	6.0	Electronic Arts	203	E
• Final Fantasy III	8.0	Square Enix	211	E10+
Finding Nemo: Escape to the Big Blue	5.0	THQ	202	E
Flushed Away	N/A	D3PA	210	E
Franklin's Great Adventures	N/A	American Game Factory	200	E
Freedom Wings	6.0	Natsume	207	E10+
Golden Nugget Casino DS	6.5	Majesco	201	T
Greg Hastings' Tournament Paintball Max'd	N/A	Activision	201	E10+
Guilty Gear Dust Strikers	7.0	Majesco	204	T
Gunpey DS	6.5	Namco Bandai	210	E
Harlem Globetrotters World Tour	N/A	DSI	211	E
Harvest Moon DS	6.0	Natsume	208	E
Hi Hi Puffy Ami Yumi The Genie and the Amp	4.5	D3PA	206	E10+
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	4.0	Vivendi	203	E
Justice League Heroes	3.0	Warner Bros. Interactive	210	E10+
• Konductra	N/A	0–3	208	E
The Legend of Spyro A New Beginning	N/A	Sierra	209	E
LEGO *Star Wars* II: The Original Trilogy	4.5	LucasArts	209	E
• LostMagic	8.0, 7.0	Ubisoft	204	E
Madden NFL 07	7.5	Electronic Arts	208	E

NINTENDO POWER

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EVERYONE 10+
E
10+
Crude Humor
Mild Cartoon Violence

Mage Knight: Destiny's Soldier	N/A	Namco Bandai	210	E10+
Magical Starsign	7.0	Nintendo	210	E
Magnetica	8.0	Nintendo	205	T
Mario Hoops 3-on-3	7.5	Nintendo	209	E
Mario Vs. Donkey Kong 2: March of the Minis	7.5	Nintendo	209	E
MechAssault: Phantom War	8.0	Majesco	209	T
Mega Man ZX	8.5	Capcom	208	T
Metroid Prime Hunters	8.5, 8.0	Nintendo	203	T
Micro Machines V4	N/A	Codemasters	211	E
Mini-RC Rally	N/A	Summitsoft	204	E
Monopoly/Boggle/Battleship	7.0	Atari	200	E
Monster House	5.5	THQ	207	E
My Frogger Toy Trials	N/A	Konami	211	E
Nacho Libre	7.0	Majesco	210	E10+
Need For Speed: Carbon	N/A	Electronic Arts	211	E
New Super Mario Bros.	9.5, 9.5, 9.5	Nintendo	205	E
Nicktoons: Battle for Volcano Island	N/A	THQ	210	E
Open Season	N/A	Ubisoft	209	E
Over the Hedge	6.0	Activision	205	E
Over the Hedge: Hammy Goes Nuts	N/A	Activision	210	E
Pac-Man World 3	3.0	Namco	200	E
Peter Jackson's King Kong	3.5	Ubisoft	200	T
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	6.0	Buena Vista	206	T
Point Blank DS	6.0	Namco Bandai	206	E10+
Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Blue Rescue Team	8.0	Nintendo	209	E
Pokémon Ranger	7.0	Nintendo	210	E
Pokémon Trozei	8.5	Nintendo	203	E
Rainbow Islands Revolution	4.5	Codemasters	208	E
Resident Evil: Deadly Silence	8.5	Capcom	207	M
The Ruie Rabbits!	8.0	Sega	201	T
Scooby-Doo! Who's Watching Who?	6.5	THQ	210	E
The Sims 2 Pets	5.5	Electronic Arts	211	E
SpongeBob SquarePants: Creature from the Krusty Krab	N/A	THQ	210	E
Star Fox Command	9.5	Nintendo	208	E10+
Star Trek: Tactical Assault	5.5	Bethesda	210	T
The Suite Life of Zack & Cody	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E
Super Black Bass Fishing	4.5	Majesco	204	E
Super Monkey Ball: Touch & Roll	6.5, 7.5	Sega	201	E
Super Princess Peach	7.5	Nintendo	202	E
Tamagotchi Connection: Corner Shop	5.0	Bandai	201	E
Tao's Adventure: Curse of the Demon Seal	6.0	Konami	203	E
Tenchu: Dark Secret	5.0	Nintendo	205	T
Tetris DS	9.5	Nintendo	205	E
Texas Hold 'Em Poker Pack	N/A	Summitsoft	200	E
That's So Raven: Psychic on the Scene	N/A	Buena Vista	210	E
Tom and Jerry Tales	N/A	Warner Bros. Interactive	210	E
Tamagotchi Connection: Cornershop 2	N/A	Namco Bandai	211	E
Tomb Raider: Legend	4.5	Eidos	210	T
Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam	7.5	Activision	211	E
Top Gun	4.0	Mastiff	202	E10+
Top Spin 2	6.0	2K Games	206	E
Touch Detective	6.0	Atlus	211	E10+
True Swing Golf	5.0	Nintendo	201	E
Worms: Open Warfare	7.0	THQ	202	E10+
X-Men: The Official Game	7.0	Activision	205	E10+
Yoshi's Island DS	8.0	Nintendo	211	E

GAME BOY ADVANCE

2006 FIFA World Cup	7.5	Electronic Arts	204	T
Alex Rider: Stormbreaker	N/A	THQ	208	E10+
The Ant Bully	N/A	Midway	202	T
Avatar: The Last Airbender	N/A	THQ	210	E
Babar to the Rescue	N/A	The Game Factory	206	T
Backyard Baseball 2007	3.5	Atari	204	T
Backyard Basketball 2007	N/A	Atari	209	T
The Barnyard	6.5	THQ	207	T
Battle B Daman	6.5	Atlus	207	T
Battle B Daman: Fire Spirits!	6.5	Atlus	210	E
Bionicle Heroes	N/A	Eidos	211	T
Bratz: Forever Diamonds	N/A	THQ	210	T
Cabbage Patch Kids: The Patch Puppy Rescue	N/A	D3PA	204	E
Candy Land/Chutes & Ladders, Memory	N/A	Destination	200	E
Capcom Classics Mini Mix	7.5	Capcom	209	T
Care Bears: Care Quest	N/A	The Game Factory	200	EC
Cars	6.5	THQ	206	E
Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance/ Aria of Sorrow Double Pack	9.0	Konami	202	T
Catz	N/A	Ubisoft	204	E
The Cheetah Girls	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E
Curious George	7.0	Namco	202	E
Disney's American Dragon: Jake Long: Rise of the Huntsclan	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E10+
Dr. Sudoku	6.0	Mastiff	203	E
Dragon Ball: Advanced Adventure	7.0	Atari	203	E10+
Drill Dozer	9.0	Nintendo	201	E
Elf Bowling 1 & 2	N/A	Ignition	200	T
Eragon	N/A	Nintendo	211	E10+
FIFA 07	N/A	Electronic Arts	210	E
Final Fantasy IV Advance	9.0	Nintendo	200	E10+
Final Fantasy V Advance	8.5	Nintendo	210	E
Flushed Away	N/A	D3PA	210	E
Franklin the Turtle	N/A	American Game Factory	200	EC
The Game of Life: Yahtzee: Payday	N/A	Destination	200	E
Games Explosion!	4.0	THQ	208	E
Garfield and His Nine Lives	5.0	American Game Factory	204	E
Garfield: The Search for Pooky	N/A	American Game Factory	200	E
Greg Hastings Tournament Paintball Max'd	N/A	Activision	200	E10+
Harlem Globetrotters: World Tour	N/A	DSI	211	E
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	4.0	Vivendi	203	E
Justice League Heroes: The Flash	5.5	Warner Bros. Interactive	210	E10+
Koala Brothers: Outback Adventures	N/A	American Game Factory	200	EC
Kong: King of Atlantis	N/A	Majesco	200	E
Kong: The 8th Wonder of the World	6.0	UB Soft	200	E10+
The Land Before Time: Into the Mysterious Beyond	N/A	American Game Factory	201	E
The Legend of Spyro: A New Beginning	N/A	Sierra	200	E
LEGO Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy	N/A	LucasArts	209	E
Let's Ride! Dreamer	N/A	THQ	203	E
Madden NFL 07	7.0	Electronic Arts	208	E
Majesco's Sports Pack	N/A	Majesco	201	E10+
Mega Man Battle Network 6: Cybeast Gregar & Cybeast Falzar	7.5	Capcom	206	E
Mission Encounters: Harvest Time Hop & Fly	N/A	The Game Factory	206	E
Monster House	5.0	THQ	207	E
Naruto: Ninja Council	4	Tomy D3PA	203	E10+
Naruto: Ninja Council 2	5.5	Tomy/D3PA	210	E10+
Need For Speed: Carbon	N/A	Electronic Arts	211	E
Nicktoons: Battle for Volcano Island	N/A	THQ	210	E
Open Season	N/A	Ubisoft	209	E
Operation: Mouse Trap: Simon	N/A	Destination	200	E
Over the Hedge	3.5	Activision	205	E
Over the Hedge: Hammy Goes Nuts	N/A	Activision	210	E
Paws & Claws: Resort	N/A	THQ	203	E
Phil of the Future	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	7.5	Buena Vista	206	E10+
Pocket Dogs	N/A	D-3	200	E
Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Red Rescue Team	8	Nintendo	209	E
Rec Room Challenge	N/A	Majesco	200	E
The Santa Clause 3	N/A	Buena Vista	209	E
The Sims 2 Pets	N/A	Electronic Arts	211	E
Sonic the Hedgehog Genesis	6	Sega	211	E
SpongeBob SquarePants: Creature from the Krusty Krab	N/A	THQ	210	E
SRS: Street Racing Syndicate	5.5	Destination	201	T
Sudoku Fever	3.0	Global Star	202	E
Sudoku Man	N/A	JFO Interactive	206	E
Summon Night: Swordcraft Story	8.0	Atlus	207	E10+
Summon Night: Swordcraft Story 2	8.5	Atlus	210	E10+
Super Robot Taisen: Original Generation	6.5	Atlus	207	T
Super Robot Taisen: Original Generation 2	7.0	Atlus	211	T
Tales of Phantasia	8.5	Nintendo	202	E10+
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Double Pack	N/A	Konami	206	E
Tom and Jerry Tales	N/A	Warner Bros. Interactive	210	E
Tomb Raider: Legend	N/A	Eidos	210	T
Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam	7.5	Activision	211	E
Top Spin 2	N/A	2K Games	200	E
Totally Spies!	5.5	Atari	201	E
The Tower SP	7.0	Sega	203	E
Tringo	N/A	Crave	200	E
The Wild	N/A	Buena Vista	204	E
X-Men: The Official Game	3.5	Activision	205	E10+
Yggdra Union	7.5	Atlus	211	T
Yu-Gi-Oh! GX Duel Academy	6.0	Konami	201	E
Yu-Gi-Oh! Ultimate Masters: World Championship Tournament 2006	6.0	Konami	204	E

>METAL SLUG ANTHOLOGY

As someone who doesn't have a lot of history with Metal Slug, I still had a blast playing this Anthology. All of the games hold up remarkably well, and offer the best old-school action this side of Contra.

—Steve T.

RED STEEL

The early buzz on the W
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>FINAL FANTASY V ADVANCE

When I played FINAL FANTASY V on PlayStation it was a chore, but the GBA version is a joy to play thanks to a vastly improved translation and numerous new features.

—Chris H.

CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN

Portrait of Ruin reinforces the
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Interactive Insanity

Remote-wielding shoppers raise a ruckus as Wii invades malls across the country.

When Nintendo first introduced Wii to the world, the company knew that it had to get the controller into the hands of the people—only then would they understand how different the Wii experience really is. What better place to find the masses during the holiday season than at the mall? We decided to pay a visit to the Westfield Southcenter Mall (one of 25 where Nintendo has set up shop) on November 18—the day before Wii launched—to see what sort of people might show up to play the new system.

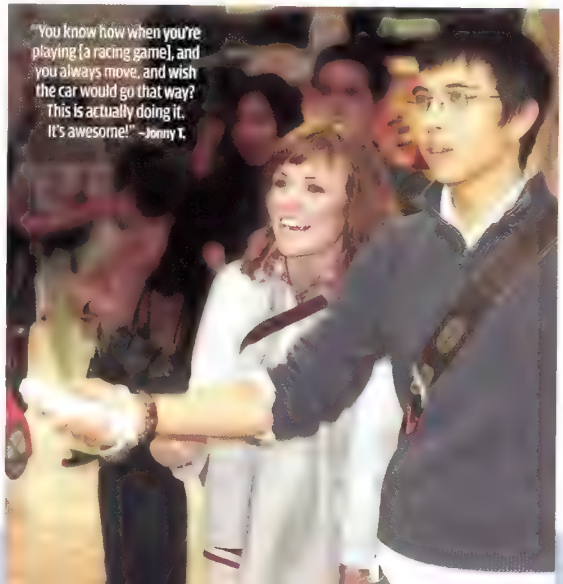
When we arrived, we were surprised to see a wide variety of folks crowded around the six Wii stations. From grandmas to avid gamers, everyone was partaking of the madness and having a blast, swinging pretend golf clubs, baseball bats, and swords with no concern for saving face. We interviewed a random sampling of mall-goers—some who came specifically to play Wii, and others who had never even heard of it but happened to be walking by—in an attempt to get some honest first impressions of the system. As the quotes will attest, the reaction was very positive.

The Wii Mall Experience will be running through January 13. If you'd like to visit a mall and try out Wii for yourself, hit up wii.nintendo.com to find out if there's a participating location near you.

ANDY M.

Playing Twilight Princess for the first time is definitely something to smile about.

"A game can have as much graphics as possible, and be as realistic as possible, but if you don't feel involved, then why play it?" —Ryan F.



"You know how when you're playing [a racing game], and you always move, and wish the car would go that way? This is actually doing it. It's awesome!" —Jonny T.

"It's a totally new experience. There aren't very many games out there that make you move and really immerse yourself in the gameplay. It was refreshing to get up and do that." –Ron S.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Plug in and geek out with the rest of the Nintendo community

LET IT SNOW! Dec. 29, 2006–Mar. 11, 2007

In years past, Nintendo has partnered with Burton Snowboards to sponsor the Burton Demo Tour, a snowboarding gaming extravaganza across North America. The tour is on again for '07, and will be hitting the following locations. (Visit www.burton.com for up-to-date details.)

Winter Park (CO)
Dec. 29-31

Heavenly (CA)
Jan. 5-7

Big Bear (CA)
Jan. 13-15

Park City (UT)
Jan. 19-21

Copper Mountain (CO)
Feb. 2-4

Mt. Hood Meadows (OR)
Feb. 9-11

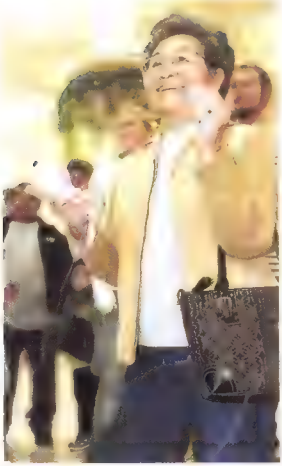
Boyne Highlands (MI)
Feb. 17-19

Mountain Creek (NJ)
Feb. 23-25

Stratton (VT)
Mar. 2-4

Waterville Valley (NH)
Mar. 9-11

It looks like "Santa" is getting the message.



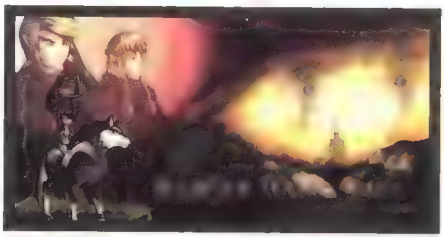
"I like it because it was a lot easier. Like, I won't play Xbox because I think it's too hard to use the controller. This was easy and fun." –Lindsey J.

Finally, a golfer that doesn't dress like your grandpa.

The Legend Lives

The Zelda series has long inspired some of the greatest fan art in the gaming world, so it was no surprise when our online Twilight Princess art contest brought in some serious beauties. Our monthly NSider review will return to Community next issue—for now, enjoy some Zelda-themed masterpieces.

ARTIST: STARSHOCK

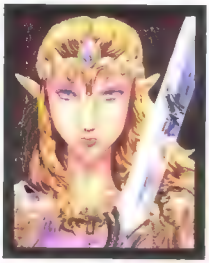


ARTIST: VEGA101

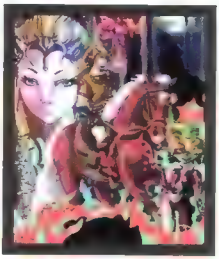
ARTIST: IRIDESTRIS

ARTIST: NEMONINE

ARTIST: GRUEMPY



ARTIST: MARIMBAMONKEY14



ARTIST: ZERUDAHIME

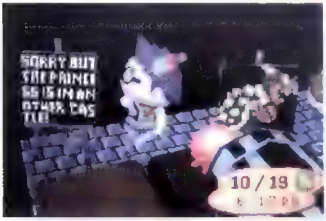
ARTIST: KYUMUU

Looking to submit art for the first time and not sure what to do? Visit **forums.nintendo.com** for details. Be sure to read the rules before you post your masterpieces.

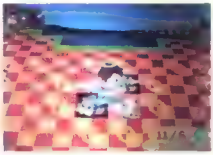
Your Town, Your Rules

While the pattern editor [illegible] the mag-[illegible] customize their towns. We [illegible] photos, both [illegible] community [illegible] the mag. —Andy M.

Ian H.'s AC town—called Sweet Street—has ice cream instead of grass, plus chocolate sidewalks and peppermint hedges. Yummy!



Reader Benjamin D. converted every room in his house into a different level from Super Mario Bros.



Behold Juan T.'s re-creation of Green Hill Zone from Sonic the Hedgehog!

NSider HYPER METAL SONIC shows off his war-torn AC town.

We're pretty sure reader Sam L. is a Nintendo fan

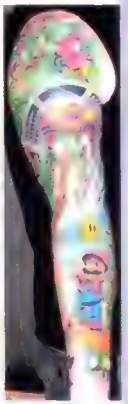
Family Fun

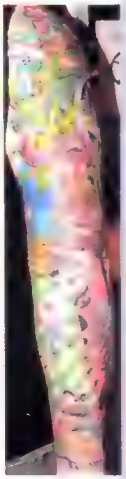
For Halloweeen this year, [illegible] Sasha M. sewed Nintendo-themed costumes for [illegible] family. And this is not a one-time occurrence. She has previously dressed up her family in costumes from Pokemon and The Legend of Zelda. Sasha's [illegible] off easily get our "Coolest Mom Ever" award. —Andy M.

Clockwise from the top-left: Papa Wario, Mama Peach, Baby Bowser, Luigi, and Mario

An Epic Sleeve

[illegible] —Andy M





Elijah's first Nintendo fave—Mr. Game & Watch can be spotted on his upper wrist

March 2007 Vol. 213

NEXT MONTH

The Nintendo Power Award nominations look back at 2006 while our previews look ahead to 2007.

RING LEADER

An exclusive preview of Sonic and the Secret Rings kicks off our Wii coverage. Find out what's in store for the speedy 3-D platformer.

MARIO PARTY RSVP

The series that started the party-game genre will make its Wii debut this spring. We'll have the scoop from party central.

THE AMAZING RACE

A decade after it made waves on the N64, Diddy Kong Racing returns in full glory on the DS. Get to the finish line first with our strategy miniguide.

GREED IS GOOD

Returning to the 2-D platformer from whence he came, Wario is at his thieving, conniving best in Master of Disguise. Our feature-length preview will help you stake out the DS adventure.

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Adult (18+)

Rating Pending

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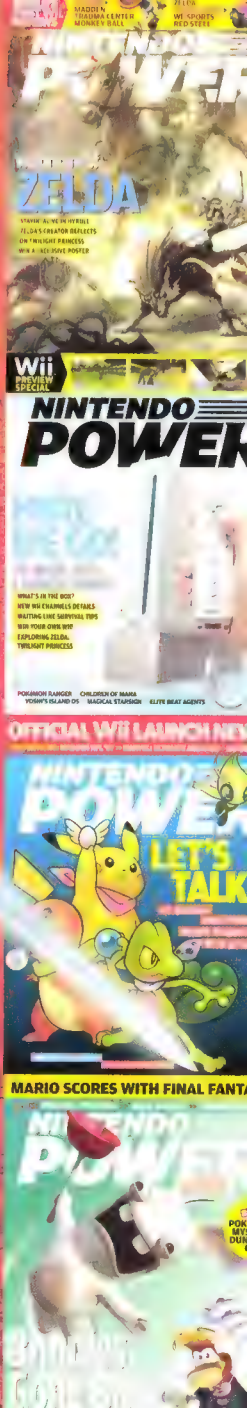

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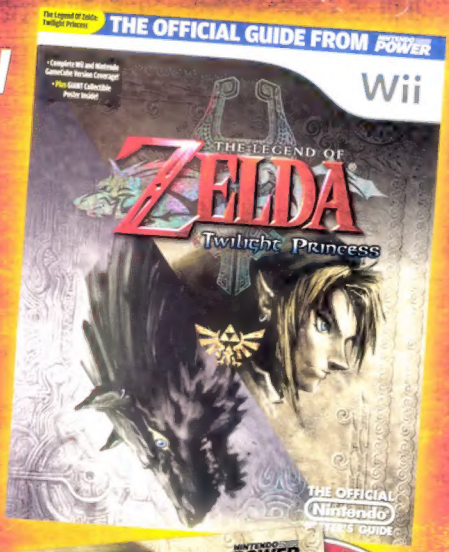

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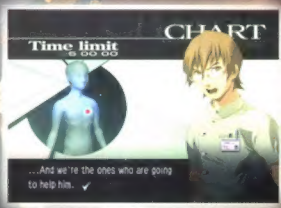

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